Indira Gandhi National Open University
School of Interdisciplinary and
Trans-disciplinary Studies

MPY – 001

Indian Philosophy

Block 1

INTRODUCTION TO INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Expert Committee

Prof. Gracious Thomas
Director, School of Social Work
IGNOU

Prof. Renu Bharadwaj
School of Humanities
IGNOU

Prof. George Panthanmackel,
Senior Consultant, IGNOU

Dr. M. R. Nandan
Govt. College for Women
Mandya - Mysore

Dr. Kuruvila Pandikattu
Jnana-deepa Vidyapeeth
Ramwadi,
Pune

Dr Babu Joseph
CBCI Centre
New Delhi

Prof. Tasadduq Husain
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

Dr. Bhuvaneswari
Lavanya Flats
Gangai Amman Koil St.
Thiruvanmiyur
Chennai – 600 041

Dr. Alok Nag
Vishwa Jyoti Gurukul
Varanasi

Dr. Jose Kuruvachira
Salesian College & IGNOU Study Centre
Dimapur, Nagaland

Dr. Sathya Sundar Sethy
Dept of Humanities
IIT, Chennai.

Dr. Joseph Martis
St. Joseph's College
Jeppu, Mangalore – 2

Dr. Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon
147, Kabir park
Opp. GND University
Amristar – 143 002

Prof. Y.S. Gowramma
Principal,
College of Fine Arts,
Manasagangotri
Mysore – 570 001

Block Preparation

Units 1 & 3	Prof. R. Gopalakrishnan Formerly Head, Dept of Philosophy University of Madras.
Unit 2	Dr. S. Bhuvaneshwari Tiruvanmiyur, Chennai.
Unit 4	Dr. V. John Peter IGNOU, New Delhi.

Content Editor
Dr. V. John Peter
IGNOU, New Delhi

Format Editor
Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

Programme Coordinator
Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

The literal meaning of the world 'philosophy' is 'love of wisdom,' which has been split into '*philo'* and '*sophia*.' Since the term 'philosophy' is fascinating, but elusive, there are several definitions for this term. All the definitions centre on the intellectual exercise concerned with the nature of reality from human perspective. Mainly philosophy deals with the perennial problems of life. As life is a complex and complicated phenomenon, the role of philosophy is immense in making an enquiry into the issues emerging in human life. Issues concerning with social, political, moral, religious, racial, cultural, linguistic and economic spheres, confront human beings, the impact of philosophical investigation gains significance in explicating the real meaning or goal of life.

By 'Indian Philosophy' we mean the philosophical systems emerged in the Indian soil. Indian philosophy has been designated as '*darsana'* which means intuitive vision. The Indian seekers of wisdom are seriously concerned with *sat,* existence which is the truth also, *cit* (consciousness), and *ananda* (everlasting happiness). Liberation or *mukti* becomes the salient feature of Indian philosophy. Religion also plays a vital role in Indian thought. On par with Western philosophy, Indian philosophy also have dealt deeply with political ideologies, social doctrines, linguistic analysis, aesthetic explanations, cultural heritage and encompasses all the basic features of life.

In **Block 1** the students are introduced into the world of philosophy in general and of Indian philosophy in general. The specific characteristics of Indian philosophy would enable them to understand the speciality of philosophical thought process of Indian people. As the scriptures and basic philosophical texts are the sources in which we could unearth the rich heritage of philosophical thought patterns of various Indian traditions, this block deals with those foundational texts.

Block 2 brings forth the ancient philosophical schools that are from *sramanic* traditions, down to earth philosophies, namely, Carvaka, Buddhism and Jainism. These are concerned with the every-dayness of human existence, with material and moral injunctions.

Block 3 briefly states of the metaphysical, epistemological and axiological theories and arguments of important Indian philosophical systems of classical period. Nyaya and Vaisesika schools share a basic metaphysical doctrines and differ only in elaboration of certain particular elements which they find more important than other concepts. Similarly Samkhya and Yoga have a mutual interaction in terms of their doctrines. The Mimamsa school of Indian philosophy of language deals mostly with the interpretative theories to support their way of life with Vedic ritualism.

Block 4 deals with the three major Vedantic schools, Advaita, Visistadvaita and Dvaita along with the pluralistic realist school of Saiva Siddhanta from Tamil Saivism. The propounders and subsequent thinkers of these schools have made many outstanding contributions to the problems of Philosophy, especially Indian philosophy.

Block 5 attempts at bringing a comprehensive understanding of Indian philosophical thoughts. Every school of Indian philosophy has developed a profound metaphysics of its own which is intertwined with the epistemology and ethics. Indian philosophy has evolved through a rich tradition of exegesis and dialectics. Ranging from materialism to spiritual absolutism, Indian philosophy displays a wide range of standpoints.

Block 6 brings home to us the religious, socio-political thoughts of various modern and contemporary Indian thinkers, Vivekananda, Iqbal, Radhakrishnan, Aurobindo, Tagore, Gandhi, Ambedkar and Raimundo Panikkar. The list is not exhaustive of the thinkers in this period. We take only few representatives of all of them. However, these again could not be grouped into one or the other category.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Philosophy develops a fascination for wisdom which is different from knowledge. Philosophical wisdom manifests in several ways – mainly theoretical and applied. The former is explanatory while the latter is the combination of both theory and practice. Rational discussions emanate mainly from four perspectives; metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and religious. Vedas or the source of knowledge, is also referred to as the *Sruti.* The content of the Vedas that has come down to us for centuries is said to have been heard by the sages in deep meditation and these sages are therefore known as '*mantra drastas'* or the 'seer of the mantras'. The Upanisads reveal the Absolute Truth, which provides the means to liberation and is popularly known as the 'Vedanta.' The Vedic Literature is vast with several branches and sections. The Upanisads uniformly present the triple means to a seeker of truth, they are, *shravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana*. Mostly, the Upanishads are set in a dialogue between a teacher and a disciple and the teaching is gradual and progressive. The epics, *puranas* and Bhagavat Gita are also influential literatures as far as philosophical thoughts are concerned. The great Tamil classical, *Tirukkural* is the comprehensive treatise on morality, polity and social integrity.

Unit 1 introduces to the students the basics of the concerns of the philosophy with its different branches and the second part of the unit specifies the features of philosophy in relation to Indian thought process from the ancient times onwards. Through this unit students would understand the nature of philosophy in relation to its different branches and the characteristic features of Indian philosophical systems.

Unit 2 presents the gamut of Vedic literature and briefly mentions its contents. It analyses its portions, that is, the *Samhitas*, the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas* and the *Upanisads*. Some basic doctrines as found in the Vedas and in the Upanisads that continue to influence the modern thought and paved way for a philosophical growth are detailed in the unit.

Unit 3 introduces to the students one of the greatest philosophical treatises of India from the Tamil tradition. *Tirukkural* by Tiruvalluvar of Tamil sangam period is a classical text on practical philosophy of life with its three division on *aram* (righteousness)*, porul* (wealth)*, ibam* (happiness). The unit expounds the moral, social and political philosophy of *Tirukkural.*

Unit 4 gives a general outlook of the popular scriptures of Indian tradition namely the epics, *puranas* and the Gita. The popularity of them is due to their narrative style with illustrations, mythological stories and dialogical forms. They do contain high philosophical notions, but given in a popular language. Philosophy of devotion is the focal point in these *smrti* literature.

UNIT 1 NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Contents

1.0 OBJECTIVES

The literal meaning of the world 'philosophy' is 'love of wisdom,' which has been split into '*philo'* and '*sophia*.' Since the term 'philosophy' is fascinating, but elusive, there are several definitions for this term. All the definitions centre on the intellectual exercise concerned with the nature of reality from human perspective. Mainly philosophy deals with the perennial problems of life. As life is a complex and complicated phenomenon, the role of philosophy is immense in making an enquiry into the issues emerging in human life. Issues concerning with social, political, moral, religious, racial, cultural, linguistic and economic spheres, confront human beings; the impact of philosophical investigation gains significance in explicating the real meaning or goal of life. Through this unit students would understand the nature of philosophy in relation to its different branches and the characteristic features of Indian philosophical systems.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy develops a fascination for wisdom which is different from knowledge. Knowledge is acquired through the sense organs and mind while wisdom is obtained through the influence of the spirit called the self or soul. The former is fallible, conditioned, limited and alterable whereas the latter is infallible, unconditional, unlimited and unalterable. Though philosophy initially commences with knowledge, it culminates in wisdom. Only the men of wisdom are called 'wise men' or 'philosophers' in the genuine sense of the term. The root element for both of these exercises is 'thinking.' An ordinary human being thinks casually, but a philosopher thinks sincerely, seriously and systematically especially for the annihilation of the afflictions arising in human life. In this process a philosopher hesitates to accept any fixed explanations, beliefs or principles; rather it engages in dedicated persistent and

systematic inquiry into the prevailing assumptions, methods, as well as criteria by which critical distinctions are made.

It is a well known fact that life is full of mysteries, containing lot of miseries. Life is generally and characteristically defined as the span of existence from cradle to grave. A child is born, grows, marries, brings forth offspring and dies. The doubt remains as to what happens to the soul after death, how does a soul enter into the body before birth? Why are we born? Why should we live? Why are there so many hurdles in life? How are we to overcome sufferings? What is the importance of material life? Is spiritual life superior to material life? What are permanence and change? Why are they caused? What is the problem of one and many? How was the world created? What is the stuff out of which it has been created? Will the universe exist for ever? Is there any super power called God? How is God related to the soul and the world? Is the soul one or many? What are appearance and reality?

Philosophy endeavours to explain through speculative reasoning the possible answers to these varieties of questions. Since each philosopher develops his own answer in accordance to his intellectual calibre, we have variegated philosophical truths. One thinker refutes the other and comes forward with his own viewpoints which are subsequently refuted by successive philosophers. This attitude is based on the historical situation of the philosopher. Metaphorically speaking, a philosopher inhales much before he exhales, i.e., he studies the environment in which he lives, the philosophical predicaments pronounced by his predecessors, the scriptures or literature available during his times, and develops dialogue, discussion, argument etc., with his rival thinkers so that he sharpens his intellect before exhibiting his philosophical doctrines. The method of refuting the alien view and the presentation of one's own view results in the enrichment as well as enhancement of wisdom to the ardent admirers of philosophy. New vistas of knowledge open the floodgates of wisdom thereby eliminating ignorance. Almost all philosophers both in the occident and the orient have unanimously declared that ignorance causes misery and the remedy for all maladies is acquiring wisdom.

Philosophical wisdom manifests in several ways – mainly theoretical and applied. The former is explanatory while the latter is the combination of both theory and practice. Rational discussions emanate mainly from four perspectives; metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and religious.

1.2 METAPHYSICS

The etymological meaning of this term is that which transcends the physical realm. In physics we have direct accessibility to the material world and experience its manifestations in actual life. Metaphysical issues are deeply concerned with the intellectual analysis of the deep intricacies of the reality. In fact the truth about the 'reality' cannot be demonstrated or substantiated, but cannot be denied also. The facts about reality are conceptualized and described. Hence we have both positive

and negative approaches to reality. Further the multifarious reflections of reality enabled the philosophers to contemplate on an ultimate reality and elucidate its nature and characteristic features variously. Thus the idea of God gains more significance as the ultimate reality. Philosophers who have theistic bent of mind have attempted to prove the existence of God logically and then only they exemplify the nature and functions of God based on certain religious scriptures. The interpretation of the scriptures has made the contemporary thinkers coin the term and explain it in terms of 'hermeneutics.' The belief in one God is known as monism, two Gods, dualism and many gods, pluralism. Some philosophers develop counter-arguments to the proofs and show their inadequacy or invalidity. Some other thinkers bluntly reject the existence of God with atheistic temperament and clinching arguments as well. The ontological, cosmological, moral, teleological and design are some of the titles on which the proofs for the existence of God are based. God and other associated activities like rituals, festivals etc. are extensive studies on religion.

Another important metaphysical concept is soul or self, the sustaining force in all human and other living species, responsible for consciousness. Like God, the existence of the soul also has been established through logical arguments. The materialists deny the existence of a permanent abiding substance in the body. That substance which is responsible for all subjective phenomena is termed as the real and the realization of this self will pave the way for freedom from all sufferings. The ancient Greek philosophers had pronounced the famous slogan 'know thyself.' The idea of the self has a tinge with God of religion that it is the citadel for God to dwell in. As usual the atheists deny the existence of both of them and according to them death is the end of life. None can 'see' or 'feel' the so-called self. Only the mind and the sense organs both outer and inner are responsible for human experience. Further the terms like 'causality,' 'time,' 'space,' 'universals,' 'particulars,' 'matter,' 'form,' 'mind,' 'body,' 'idealism,' 'rationalism,' 'free will,' 'determinism,' 'naturalism,' 'solipsism' etc., are some of the metaphysical concepts which have been promulgated with arguments and equally rejected logically.

The logical positivists and the linguistic analysts have attempted to eliminate the very notion of metaphysics from the purview of philosophy based on the principle of verification. All verifiable statements are sensible and the non-verifiable statements are non-sensical and hence metaphysics is impossible. However, there are certain statements pertaining to future like the 'can' statements are neither verifiable nor non-verifiable. Hence the notion of verifiability has been bifurcated as 'strong' and 'weak' verifiabilities. In spite of the opposition to metaphysics, the study of metaphysics still retains its importance.

1.3 LOGIC AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Since thinking process and the 'thought content' form the basis of all philosophical investigations, the role of logic and epistemology becomes very significant and immense. Logic has been derived from the root 'logos' which means 'thinking.' It has been succinctly defined as the normative science of correct thinking. It is a scientific study or systematic analysis of our thinking methodology and its product viz., 'thought.' The thought process takes place thus: A unit of thought is judgement; when

a judgement is expressed in a language, it becomes a sentence. All sentences are to be converted into the logical structure viz., propositions have subject-predicate formula with a copula which should be always in the present tense. Only in this structure the linguistic expressions are considered true or false or doubtful. Aristotle is considered the father of traditional logic. Again, logic is treated as a normative science and not as a positive science. A positive science is one whose subject matter are studied 'as they are.' All natural sciences, a few human sciences such as sociology, geography, anthropology, political science, economics etc., are studied systematically whose contents are viewed from an existential point of view. No norms are prescribed for the study.

Logic, ethics and aesthetics are the normative sciences whose subject matter are studied from the 'ought to be' point of view. Logic insists on how one ought to think rather than how one is actually thinking. After a statement is made we pass judgements whether the statement is true or false and then we determine how that statement ought to have been uttered or written. There are two kinds of logic., viz., traditional and modern. The former is also known as Aristotlelian logic which consists of two sections, deduction and induction. Deductive logic is seriously concerned with the formal nature or structure of statements or propositions so that their validity or invalidity is ascertained. From a given proposition we proceed to a conclusion through some common expressions, instantly or through a medium. Also we proceed from statement to conclusion or vice-versa. In induction the very validity of the given premise is questioned. It is a method through which the major proposition which is generally a universal one is obtained. Based on certain postulates the induction method proceeds from a few particular cases to universal truth. It has been established based on observation, experiment, hypothesis, analogy, enumeration etc. Universal statements are discovered which are supplied to deductive reasoning for the application of particular instances so that the conclusion is made beyond doubt. All scientific inventions and discoveries are based on this method.

The modern logic has obtained a new dimension wherein symbols are used instead of statements and like mathematics, based on certain formulae, the arguments are proved as valid or invalid. Propositional calculus, predicate calculus and axiomatic principles are dimensions of modern logic. All the defects and deficiencies of traditional logic are rectified through formal doctrines and authentic proofs and verifications. The modern logic is also known as mathematical logic. Symbols are used for conjunctive, disjunctive, implicative and negative propositions and arguments are verified through conjunctive normal forms and certain rules of inference etc.

Epistemology or theory of knowledge envisages the messages about the methods and techniques involved in knowledge itself. It is a deep study about the origin of knowledge, nature of knowledge, relevance of knowledge and validity of knowledge. The relationship between human mind and the phenomenal world which culminates in knowledge is analysed in epistemology. Theories of truth such as correspondence theory, coherence theory and pragmatic theory form an important subject matter in this subject.

1.4. ETHICS OR MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Another branch of philosophy is ethics which has been derived from the root '*ethos'* which literally means conduct. Hence ethics is a normative science of human conduct in relation to human environment. The term 'moral' has been derived from the root '*mores'* which means behaviour. Ethics is seriously concerned with perfect human living with certain codes or principles pertaining to conduct and character. All human beings have critical situations to deal with; the reflection or reaction to such situations will determine the moral attitude of men. Morality commenced with the habits of individuals and when large number of people develop similar habits they become customs thus constituting customary morality or conventional morality. This process involves also instinct. We pass moral judgements on the instinctive behaviour of individuals whether good or bad or right or wrong. Good and bad are concerned with value while right and wrong are attributed to the established regulations or laws of the society or state. The herd instinct, the prudence, thirst, appetite, sex etc., are some of the instincts and how they are satisfied will pave the way for estimating the validity of behaviour. In the development of ethical codes, the role of reflective morality is immense. All the human activities are analysed from the perspectives of motivation, intention, consequence, etc. resulting in several theories of morality.

The fundamental question to which moral thinkers come forward to respond is: what is the standard of morality? What is the basis on which the human conduct is examined? What is the criterion by which the actions are judged to be good or bad, right or wrong? How are the norms or standards formed? As a normative science of human conduct ethics helps us in suggesting several criteria to judge human actions. They are classified as historical or classical and modern. The first one starts from Plato. Plato insists on knowledge and lack of knowledge will lead to evil. Leading a good life according to him is similar to the discovery of mathematical truth through mental power or ability. Aristotle promotes the idea of golden mean that perfect virtue lies between two extremes and a life of moderate action will bring forth happiness.

We come across several standards of morality such as hedonism (both psychological and ethical) that all human actions are oriented towards happiness; Epicureanism and cynicism come under hedonism; stoicism is a theory which advocates individual's perfection by learning to be indifferent to external influences; utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill proposes that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the standard of moral judgement. The former advocates gross utilitarianism while the latter subtle; Intuitionism, evolutionism, Marxism, Kant's critique of practical reason providing good will are some of the traditional theories of morality.

In the realm of modern ethics we have precise theories based on philosophical analysis to moral theories in connection with necessary and sufficient conditions. There are three different classifications of modern theories; i) either subjective or objective, ii) as naturalistic, non-naturalistic or emotive and iii) as motivist, deontological or consequence theories. All these theories are primarily concerned with the analysis of the language of morals. Any theory which is non-subjective is

objectivistic. Ethical judgements become subjective when they depend on the psychology of the person who alters them. If a moral judgement is reduced to natural science (especially psychology) with true or false formula then that is naturalistic. If they are not reducible to natural science then they are non-naturalistic. If any moral judgement is neither true nor false, but consists of the expressions of feelings or emotions, and then it is emotive. If a moral theory is based on motive to determine its rightness or wrongness, then that is motivist. Deontological theory does not depend upon motive or consequence but upon the obligation or duty. If the rightness or wrongness of an action is determined based on the effect, then that is known as a consequence theory. All the theories whether classical or modern are having critical estimation which really enriches our knowledge of ethics.

1.5. RELIGION

Another important branch of philosophy is religion which deals with the establishing of an intimate rapport with the Supreme Being or Reality or God. It has been generally claimed that philosophy without religion will lead to dogmatism or dry intellectualism. Similarly religion without philosophy will culminate in superstition or blind observances. Hence both philosophy and religion are complementary in clarifying the subtle implications of all rituals. The origin of religion is wonder or fear. Ancient people wondered the wonderful structure of the world and postulated that a wonderful superpower must exist to create such a magnificent universe. Some people were terrified over the terrors and horrors of the natural phenomena. As the scientific knowledge of such events was absent in those days, they were afraid of them and each force had been personified as a deity and oblations were offered; prayer songs arose; treatises on adoring such deities also emerged. A few religious people with metaphysical bent of mind wrote commentaries to such religious texts. This attitude enhanced and enriched the glory of that religious tradition. The idea of God has been introduced as a postulate and any religion with a God Supreme is based on belief, faith, love, hope and harmony.

The existence of God has been proved from three angles; i) logical, ii) scriptural and iii) experiential. Logically there are five proofs such as ontological, cosmological, moral, teleological and design. Scriptures vouchsafe for the existence of God revealed by eminent sages and saints. Experience of God in the bottom of the heart and soul is the best proof for the existence of god. The all-pervasive, all–knowing and all-powerful God is essentially required for human life mainly for expressing love or technically known as devotion or *bhakti.* For, God is personified as the very embodiment of love and this love of God towards mankind is expressed through creation, preservation, destruction and bestowal of grace. It is God's grace that sustains human beings at every moment. There are a few religions which deny the existence of a Supreme God, like Jainism and Buddhism, but they convey the idea that man can be elevated to the level of God through virtuous and compassionate living. The dwelling places for God have been constructed such as temple, church, mosque, *gurudwara* etc., and a few days are designated as auspicious and special rituals, festivals, prayers, worships etc. are offered to the presiding God in the

dwelling spot. The firm belief is that God will redeem the afflicted souls and bring them ashore from the onslaught of transmigratory existence.

It is the human soul which has been tantalised between the sacred and the profane. The luring phenomenal world has an admixture of suffering and happiness; but the engrossment in divine ecstasy will engender self illumination and lead to divine communion which is characteristically termed as the 'path of no return.' The existence of the soul also has been proved logically and intuitively as well. Self-realization becomes an inevitable prelude to God-realization. It is the soul which knows with the help of the mind and sense organs, but relinquishes the empirical entanglements so that it can move towards God and enjoy His perennial bliss eternally.

Philosophy of Religion also analyses deeply the problem of evil. Some religions declare that man has invited evils due to baser temperaments and baseless temptations; some other religions emphatically hold that it is God who has caused evil so that only after the experience of the torture of evil forces, mankind will engage in overcoming them for which the holy scriptures and discourses of enlightened personalities serve as the guiding spirit. But still the question remains. If god is benevolent and merciful, evil should not exist; but evil persists. Therefore God is not omniscient and evil is a thorn in the gracious nature of God. Religious scholars endeavour to appropriately settle the issue of evil. Most of the religions are mainly concerned with the notions of bondage and liberation. Once again the idea of soul and the conception of God are involved in this process. The soul before embodiment was pure and free, but after entering into the body it becomes bound due to self-centredness, selfish activities and attachment towards the peripheral worldly objects. Through serious involvement in religious engagements and systematic adoration with sincere devotion, the devotees believe staunchly that they can overcome bondage and attain liberation. Becoming recipients of God's grace is the only remedy to all human maladies. The everlasting solace from the worries of the world is the objective of religious life.

Another interesting factor in the religious philosophy is religious language especially found in the revelatory texts. When the saints are soaked in divinity they undergo some peak, but unique experiences which cannot be expressed at that time. Afterwards they recollect the past events and reveal them for posterity and for the betterment of the world. While doing so they refer to God's nature, soul's movements and the pernicious aspects of the world which fall under the legitimate province of the philosophers. The revealed texts contain perfect semantics, syntax and pragmatics. This phenomenon has been attributed to divine mystery.

Besides metaphysics, logic, ethics and religion, philosophy has a few applied avenues like philosophy of beauty dealing with the delightful joyous enjoyment or aversion due to ugly nature of objects of beauty. Technically this subject is known as aesthetics. Linguistic philosophy deals with the role of language in philosophical explanations, words, sentences, meaning and their interpretations are well analysed in developing sensible expressions. Political philosophy gives a fairly good account of

origin of states, forms of government, social contract theories, the role of rulers and citizens in political settings etc. Social philosophy develops the views about human relationship in social aspects, such as group formation, social conflicts, social change etc.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. How do you understand 'Philosophy'? and Explain.

....

....

....

2. Relate philosophy with other disciplines.

....

....

....

1.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

By 'Indian Philosophy' we mean the philosophical systems emerged from the Indian soil. Some scholars call it Hindu philosophy. It is not so, since a few non-Hindu systems are included such as Carvaka, Jainism and Buddhism which are really critical of Hindu doctrines. Indian philosophy has been designated as '*darsana'* which is generally translated as philosophy, but it is really means intutive vision. 'philosophy' is accepted as the nearest equivalent term to *darsana.* A few saints of the highest order develop certain unique or mystic experiences and reveal them for the benefit of posterity. The spiritual heritage commences with such revelations and they are testified by reason by a few sages who have developed metaphysical bent of mind. The intuitive vision consists of the wisdom about reality and the secrets of human life both inner and outer. The interpretations of such wisdom form the basis of philosophical inquiry pertaining to metaphysical doctrines, logical truths, ethical codes and religious practices.

The book *sarva darsana samgraha* written by Sri Madhavacariya contains the quintessence of a few systems of thought evolved in ancient India. A large number of scholars, taking into account the contents of this work as the basis, have written volumes of work of Indian philosophy from the historical, conceptual, textual, evaluative and descriptive perspectives. It has been proclaimed that Indian Philosophy is scripture-based. The revelations of the saints have been codified and they are classified as having broadly the ritualistic sections and the section on wisdom or *jnana.* The general name given to the holy text is '*veda'* which has been derived from the root, '*vid'* which means to know. The Vedic scripture is the ancient treasure trove which exemplifies the cultural heritage as well as religio-philosophical aspects of the Vedic systems. It contained both ritualistic and philosophical materials. Philosophical system like Purva Mimamsa directly developed its doctrines from the ritualistic

portion and other schools of Vedanta built up their philosophical system from the upanisdas, the philosophical portion of the Vedas. Generally Indian systems are classified as orthodox and heterodox systems, *astika* and *nastika* systems, on the basis of acceptance or rejection of the Vedic authority. The philosophical schools that accept the vedic authority are the following; Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta. Carvaka, Jainism and Buddhism do not accept the vedic authority.

1.7 SPECIAL FEATURES OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

1. Almost all the schools of Indian thought emphatically declare that *moksa* or liberation is or should be the ultimate goal of life. Only the *puranas* describe the life after death pointing out the existence of hell and heaven with popular anecdotes. Intellectually it implies that one must free oneself from the cycle of births and deaths by putting an end once for all to the strife-torn life. To achieve this ambitious goal, the Indian philosophers suggest certain means starting from lower values to reach higher and the highest values. Wealth and sensuous enjoyment are considered as having lower values, while *dharma* or righteousness is regarded as the higher value. Obviously moksha is the highest value. These four values are obligatory in the life of everyone on this earth and hence they are called as *purusarthas,* the human values.

2. Indian Philosophy expects the seekers after truth and release to lead a life of renunciation. The life of attachment will engender suffering while the life of detachment will result in eternal solace. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna categorically asserts that a life of renunciation alone will enable the aspirants to reach the domain of God. So all the schools of thought have treated ‘suffering’ as one of the motivating factors for philosophical thinking. Only when the mind is purified through non-attachment, it will have pure and perfect wisdom and rest on self-illumination, the real prelude to moksha. In fact, suffering or painful experience in life give the motivating force to promote new vistas of thinking and acting. Buddha built up philosophical doctrines on the edifice of suffering and all his noble truths centred around this concept only. The only difference that is noticed among the schools of philosophy is that according to the theistic thinkers only by the grace of God one can overcome suffering, while others insist upon individual efforts through moral, physical, psychological and spiritual means.

3. The commencement of Indian philosophy based on suffering prompted a few critics to label Indian thought as pessimistic. Even though Indian philosophy looks at the darker side of life in elucidating the issues emerging in life, the mission with which one has to overcome suffering overcomes the criticism too, i.e. Indian thinking though starts with pessimism passes through optimism and culminates in eternal pragmatism. The Indian thinkers have realised the truth that a vision without a mission is blind; a mission without a vision is drudgery and a healthy combination of both vision and mission will make human life prosperous. The pleasure which we enjoy is mixed with pain is engendered in painful situation. The seers assert that it is possible to eliminate pain alltogether and enjoy a life of bliss, *ananda.* Hence they are

seriously concerned with *sat,* existence which is the truth also, *cit* (consciousness), and *ananda* (everlasting happiness).

4. In the hierarchy of values, Indian thinkers have classified as lower values, higher value and the highest value. The axiological approach in human life becomes immense in this analysis. Carvaka system considers *kama*, sensuous pleasure as the only human value, *purusartha,* while *artha* or wealth serves as the means to achieve such ambitious aims. But the orthodox schools treat both *kama* and *artha* as the lowest and lower values respectively. They cannot annihilate the human afflictions thoroughly. They are to be checked and continued as to regularise normal human existence. On the other hand they consider *dharma*, righteousness, as the higher value and *moksa* as the highest value. Only men of virtuous living can aspire for a blissful life where there is no iota of pain. While explaining the state of liberation, *mukti¸* some thinkers advocate *jivan mukti,* liberation while alive and *videha mukti¸* liberation after the disintegration of body and soul. As salvation becomes the salient feature of Indian philosophy it is more optimistic and treats life as having a brighter side.

5. Another important characteristic feature of Indian philosophy is the law of karma, which is based on the scientific law that all actions have equal and opposite reactions and the famous adage, 'As you sow, so you reap.' All the actions will yield the results and the efficacy of the fruits is known as '*karma'* which has been derived from the root *kr,* which means action. The karmas which cause us to take birth and store up while we are born is known as *sancita karma.*The *karmas* which have started yielding the fruits are known as *prarbdha karma* and the *karmas* which we accumulate through our volitional behaviour are known as *agamic karmas.* Even those systems which do not accept God, believe in the doctrine of *karma* which is the sole reason for the cycle of births and deaths. Due to the grace of God along with human *dharmic* endeavours the enforcement of karmic forces may be annulled. The *Sancita karma* would be totally burnt due to the grace of God through the *guru* or preceptor. But *prarabdha karma* which has started fructifying like the arrow sent out of the bow will affect the body and annihilate it. For it cannot harm the soul since it is spiritually strengthened and illumined. All the systems of Indian philosophy, in one way or the other insist upon the moral training as a prelude to metaphysical understanding and religious experience. Only the Carvaka system is rigorous and gives much importance to sensuous pleasure by ignoring righteousness, *dharma,* and all the cherished norms. The other schools though not explicitly elucidate the significant role of moral codes in human life, they emphasise the necessity of ethical principles to be adapted to actual life leading to virtues and resulting in happiness. Yoga system in the means for attaining *Samadhi* places *yama,* the five principles to be refrained from and *niyama,* the five practices to be adhered to, in the beginning itself. It is generally proclaimed that it will seldom lead to immortality.

6. Religion, an important branch of philosophy, also plays a vital role in Indian thought. Vedic religion is the starting point of philosophy in India. Vedantic thought, especially visistadvaita and Dvaita are directly based on vaishnava religious tradition. Saiva Siddhanta has Saivism and worship of Siva as the religious basis. Advaita at the empirical level does not deny the concept of Isvara and resorting to religious practices. In fact, Sankara has composed several devotional songs on Lord Siva, Sakti, Vishnu and Muruga. Though we have several religious sects with these religions

constituting Hinduism, each religious sect has developed its own speculative metaphysics as well as means for redemption.

7. On par with Western philosophy, Indian philosophy also has dealt deeply with political ideologies, social doctrines, linguistic analysis, aesthetic explanations, cultural heritage and encompasses all the basic features of life. It builds up a fundamental structure with scriptural edifice and rational construction with spiritual super structure.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What are the general characteristics of Indian Philosophy?

....

....

....

2. Spell out some of the specific features of Indian Philosophy?

....

....

....

1.8 LET US SUM UP

Mainly philosophy deals with the perennial problems of life. As life is a complex and complicated phenomenon, the role of philosophy is immense in making an enquiry into the issues emerging in human life. Issues concerning with social, political, moral, religious, racial, cultural, linguistic and economic spheres, confront human beings, the impact of philosophical investigation gains significance in explicating the real meaning or goal of life. The unit has deliberated on the nature of philosophy in relation to its different branches and the characteristic features of Indian philosophical systems. Philosophy develops a fascination for wisdom which is different from knowledge. Philosophical wisdom manifests in several ways – mainly theoretical and applied. The former is explanatory while the latter is the combination of both theory and practice. Rational discussions emanate mainly from four perspectives; metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and religious.

By 'Indian Philosophy' we mean the philosophical systems which emerged in the Indian soil. Some scholars call it Hindu philosophy. It is not so, since a few non-Hindu systems are included such as Carvaka, Jainism and Buddhism which are really critical about Hindu doctrines. Indian philosophy has been designated as '*darsana'*

which is generally translated as philosophy, but it really means intutitve vision. 'Philosophy' is accepted as the nearest equivalent term to *darsana.* Indian philosophy spells out supreme goals of human life as *purusarthas.* Indian Philosophy expects the seekers after truth to lead a life of renunciation. The seers assert that it is possible to eliminate pain all together and enjoy a life of bliss, *ananda.* Hence they are seriously concerned with *sat,* existence which is the truth also, *cit* (consciousness), and *ananda* (everlasting happiness). While explaining the state of liberation, *mukti¸* some thinkers advocate *jivan mukti,* liberation while alive and *videha mukti¸* liberation after the disintegration of body and soul. As salvation becomes the salient feature of Indian philosophy it is more optimistic and treats life as having a brighter side. The law of karma, is based on the scientific law that all actions have equal and opposite reactions and on the famous adage, 'As you sow, so you reap.' Religion, an important branch of philosophy, also plays a vital role in Indian thought. On par with Western philosophy, Indian philosophy also has dealt deeply with political ideologies, social doctrines, linguistic analysis, aesthetic explanations, cultural heritage and encompasses all the basic features of life.

1.9 KEY WORDS

Metaphysics: Branch of Philosophy dealing with 'being.'

Epistemology: Theory of knowledge, dealing with meaning of knowledge, process of attaining valid knowledge and certitude of knowledge

***Darsana*:** Indian term used generally to mean 'Philosophy.' Literally it means 'seeing' or 'having a glimpse' of truth.

***Purusarthas*:** Supreme goals of human life, like wealth, pleasure, righteousness and liberation.

1.10 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Burtt, Edwin A. *In Search of Philosophic Understanding.* Indiapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980.

Emmet, E.R. *Learning to Philosophize.* New York: Penguin Books, 1978.

Lachs, John & Charles Scott. Ed. *The Human Search: An Introduction to Philosophy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Hiriyanna, M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy.* London: Unwin Publishers, 1973.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy.* 2 Vols. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1977.

UNIT 2 INTRODUCTION TO VEDAS AND UPANISADS

Contents

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this Unit – is to present a general outline of the origin and development of Vedic literature and its epistemological position in the different philosophical schools of India. Vedas have been held as the primary source of a structured society that is believed to pave way for a religious growth and induce a philosophical quest. The various concepts and doctrines of the Vedas can find its relevance in today's world. In this unit, we shall briefly analyze the Vedic literature and its concepts.

By the end of this unit you should be able:

- to gain a general idea of the vast Vedic literature and their content
- to understand the historical growth of religious practices in the Vedic background
- to learn the important concepts that led to the rise of Indian Philosophical systems
- to grasp the relevant concepts of the Vedas and appreciate its relevance in the modern world.

2.1 VEDAS AND ITS CONTENTS

Vedas or the source of knowledge, is also referred to as the *Sruti* or that which is heard, *Apauruseya* or that which is not authored by a human, and *Shastra* or that which serves as a guide through its teaching. The words '*Agama*' and '*Amnaya*' are synonyms of the Veda. Since Veda is considered as a revelation it is termed as the 'primary' source of knowledge. The content of the Vedas that has come down to us for centuries is said to have been heard by the sages in deep meditation and these sages are therefore known as '*mantradrastas*' or the 'seer of the mantras'. They

transmitted this received knowledge orally to the next generation. Thus, in a generation of oral transmission, the Vedas are preserved. Though we have lost many of the Vedic mantras, we have managed to preserve this tradition to some extent. Moreover, the orally transmitted vedic mantras were made available in writing too and the oldest available written literature is considered to be the Rig Veda. Even though the written or printed material is not considered as the preservation of the Vedic tradition, since oral practise alone is the method to preserve the Vedas, however, the written records give a wider scope for analaysis of the historical development of the Vedic tradition. Let us now briefly see the content of the Vedas.

The word 'Veda' generally refers to 'Mantras' and 'Brahmanas'. Mantras are hymns in praise of gods who are invoked in a ritual and Brahmanas are those portions which give various instructions on the performance of rituals. Based on this, Veda is said to be of two kinds, Mantras and Brahmanas. An anthology of mantras is known as 'Samhitas' and the Brahmana portions are an elaboration and are treated as the commentary to the Samhita portions. The Brahmana portions are further divided into three, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanisads. The Brahmana portions primarily teach the nature of ritual (yaga) and thus the word Brahmana also means '*yajna'* (ritual). The Aranyakas are so named because it deals with meditation which are generally taken up while living in forest (*aranya*). The Upanisads reveal the Absolute Truth, which provides the means to liberation and is popularly known as the 'Vedanta'. Primarily the source with the four portions, namely, Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka and the Upanisad is known as the Veda. But popularly the ritualistic and meditative portions (or at times only the ritualistic portions) came to be known as Veda and the philosophical discovery in the Upanisads got a distinct identity. Therefore, we say, the Veda and Upanisads. (But upanisads are also part of the Vedas.)

As to the historical data of the origin and development of the Vedas, we have many divided views among the historians and researchers, however here we provide a particular view.

1. Age of the Rig Veda Samhita (2500 to 1500 B.C)
2. Age of the Later Samhitas, Brahmanas and Upanisads (1500 to 500 B.C)

Veda is one source with three forms and this is often referred to as '*Veda Trayi'* or Three Vedas. The Rig, the Yajur and the Sama – are the three Vedas. In such references, the meaning of the Veda refers to the 'creation' and the three Vedas means the threefold creation of *Agni* or Fire (Rig), *Vayu* or Air (Yajur) and *Aditya* or Sun (*Sama*). The '*Atharva'* refers to the '*soma'* or the essence without which the above three cannot survive. The popular view is that the Sage Vyasa segregated the Vedic hymns, that is, the mantra-samhitas into four, viz., Rig Samhita, Yajur-Samhita, Sama-Samhita and Atharva-Samhita and thus we say there are four Vedas.

For a Vedic ritual to take place, it requires four *Rtviks* (roughly translated as Priests). They are:

i) *Hota* – one who invokes the deity of a particular ritual by employing the invocatory hymns as found in the Rig-Samhitas and the collections of such hymns is referred to as Rig Veda. This is said to have been taught by Vyasa to Pela.

ii) *Adhvaryu* – one who performs the rituals as enjoined and the relevant mantras are in the Yajur-Samhita and the collection of this is known as Yajurveda which was taught to Vaimshampayana by Vyasa.

iii) *Udgatha* – one who sings in high intonation and maintains the rhythm of chanting as given in Samaveda and this is taught by Vyasa to Jaimini.

iv) *Brahma* – one who takes care of the entire proceedings of the ritual and suggests compensatory acts in case of omissions and commissions and this was taught to Sumantu by Vyasa.

Thus, the four Vedas were propagated through these four disciples of Vyasa.

2.2 A GENERAL SURVEY OF THE VEDIC LITERATURE

We shall briefly deal with the Vedic literature and their contents beginning from the Rig Veda. Each Veda, as we had already mentioned, consists of four portions, namely, Samhita, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanisads. Here, we shall deal with these four portions of each Veda in a nutshell.

Rig Veda:

The word '*Rig'* means praise or eulogy. The collection of Rig is known as Rig Veda. It is set in metrical form. The Rig is considered as the oldest record of revelations and the language of the *Rig* is considered as the most ancient.

There are five branches of Rig-Samhita and they are:

1. *Shakala*
2. *Vaskala*
3. *Ashvalayana*
4. *Samkhya* and
5. *Mandakayana*

Rig-Samhita contains *Suktas* and *Mandalas*. *Sukta* means that which has been received from a reliable source and it is of four types:

a. *Richi Sukta*: a collection of hymns revealed through the Sages
b. *Devata Sukta*: a collection of hymns in praise of gods
c. *Chanda Sukta*: a collection of hymns in the same metrical form and

d. *Artha Sukta*: a collection of hymns, wherein the meaning of the mantras gets concluded.

The Mandalas are the sections of the Rig-Samhita. There are ten Mandalas with fifty *anuvakas* or sub-sections which contain *suktas*. The suktas in turn contain the *mantras*.The two Brahmanas and Aranyakas of the Rig that are available are: Aitareya Brahmana and Shankyayana Brahmana; Aitareya Aranyaka and Shankyayana Aranyaka. The popular Upanisads of the Rig are Kausitaki and Aitareya upanisads.

Yajurveda:

It is widely popular with varied descriptions of the yajna or rituals and is found in prose form. There are two divisions of Yajur, namely Krishna Yajurveda and Shukla Yajurveda. The Krishna Yajur is a combination of mantras and brahmanas, whereas, the Shukla Yajur is predominantly mantra portions. Of the fifty branches of Krishna Yajur, we have today only four branches (Taittiriya, Maitrayani, Katha and Kapilashthakatha). The Shukla Yajur is further divided into Madhyandina branch and Kanva branch. There is only a slight difference in the rendering of the contents of these two branches of Shukla Yajurveda. The famous available brahmana of the Krishna Yajurveda is the Taittiriya Brahmana and that of Shukla Yajur is Shatapatha Brahmana. The main Aranyaka portions of the Yajurveda are Taittiriya Aranyaka and Brihadaranyaka (also contains upanisadic portions). The widely read Upanisads of the Krishna Yajurveda are Kathopanisad and Taittiriyopanisad. The upanisads of the Shukla Yajurveda are Brihadaranayka and the Ishopanisad.

Samaveda:

The Samaveda is the Rig Veda set in musical form. The Samaveda consists of two predominant parts, viz., the Archika part and the Ganam part. The Archika part is that which consists of meanings of the words and it is a collection of Rks. It is further divided into Purva Archika and Uttara Archika. The Purva Archika consists of six chapters and is divided into four parts as:

1. Agneya parva (consists of mantras related to Agni)
2. Aindra parva (consists of mantras related to Indra)
3. Pavamana parva (with mantras related to Soma) and
4. Aranyakas (on meditations)

The Uttara Archika is with nine chapters with various divisions that primarily deals with the practice of various rituals. The three main branches of Samaveda are Kauthuma branch, Ranayaniya branch and Jaiminiya branch.

The various intonations and method of singing in different pitches are mentioned in detail in the Samaveda. The musical form is broadly divided into four kinds:

a. Veyaganam – the first five chapters of Purva-Archika are sung in Veyaganam.
b. Aranyakaganam – The mantras of the Aranyaka portion are sung in Aranyakaganam.

c. Oohaganam and d. Oohyaganam are the musical pattern of the Uttara-Archika portions.

Some of the important Sama-Brahmanas are Daivatam, Vamshabrahmanam, Tandyam etc. The available one Aranyaka of Samaveda is the Talavakara-Aranyaka. At the end of the Talavakara we find the Kenopanisad. The Chandogyopanisad also belongs to Samaveda.

Atharvaveda:

The Atharvaveda consists of nine branches and we have only two such branches available, namely, the Shaunaka branch and the Pippalada branch. There are three Samhitas of the Atharva, namely, Aashi, Acharya and Vidhiprayoga Samhitas. The only available Brahmana of the Atharvaveda is the Gopatha Brahmanam. It consists of two parts, Purvagopatha and Uttaragopatha. So far, we have not found any Aranyaka of the Atharvaveda. The three prominent upanisads of the Atharva are Prashnopanisad, Mundakopanisad and Mandukyopanisad.

Commentators of the Vedas:

The celebrated commentator of the Vedas, especially, the Brahmana portions is Sayana. Some of the other important commentators to various portions of the Veda like, Samhita, Aranyakas etc., are Skandasvami, Narayana, Madhavabhatta, Venkatamadhava, Anandatirtha, Uvvata, Halayudha, Ananta and others. The commentaries help us in understanding the import of the Vedic words. The commentators reveal the changing conditions in their interpretative commentaries.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) Give a brief outline of the Vedas and its Contents.

……………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

2) Give an account of the Vedic Literature and Its Commentators.

………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………...

……………………………………………………………………………………….

2.3. SOME IMPORTANT VEDIC CONCEPTS - I

Now, we shall briefly embark upon the varied topics found in the four portions of the Vedas and then derive certain important concepts that serve as the foundation of Vedic Religion and Philosophy.

Samhitas:

In the Rig-Mandalas, we find mention of many worldly affairs especially related to human life. Various aspects like the earliest mention on marriage and ancestral worship is seen in the Rig. The importance of charity (*dana*) is highlighted in the Rig-Suktas. Some of the thought-provoking and paradoxical suktas of the Rig Veda are Nasadiya Sukta (10-129), Purushasukta (10-90), Hiranyagarbha Sukta (10-121) etc. The Yajur-Samhitas prescribes the procedures for performance of daily and occasional duties of an individual. The Atharva-Samhitas mark the beginning of ancient ruling and administration. There are descriptions of many actions like conquering an enemy, gaining wealth etc. We find discussion on Science especially on medicine, disease and cure. The Ayushya-Sukta of Atharva is quite well-known for it is the prayer for long healthy life.

Brahmanas:

By the time the Brahmana part of the Vedas developed the society has undergone a well-defined stratification with a common goal. In this period, performance of rituals for the individual and total benefit dominated the scene that was based on the Vedic designation in the form of *varna* (class) and *ashrama* (stage of life). The ritual or the *yajna* symbolises an integrated personality for a harmonious life. In a ritual, there are two types of oblations, one is the thought at the mental level and the other is the speech. The thought alone is expressed as the speech in a ritual and the same holds good in life too which aids in a harmonious living.

Aranyakas:

In the development of Aranyaka portions, we find well-defined concepts of Time. There is the mention of the transcendental and the empirical time, where the empirical time slot is compared to the perennial flow of waters. There is a description of various seasons and their effects on the health of living beings. The importance of study of one’s own scripture and fivefold compulsory acts (*pancha-mahayajna*) are found in this portion. The fivefold compulsory acts are: worship of gods, worship of lineage of teachers, worship of ancestors, service to humanity and service to the animal and plant kingdom. We find here the description of meditation on *prana* or vital breath. Since this portion primarily concentrates on bringing about a serene mind, varieties of *vratas* or vows are prescribed. The Upanisads deal with the philosophical enquiry into the nature of the ultimate truth and reveal the liberating knowledge. We shall deal with the Upanisads a little later in this unit.

Vedic gods:

The hymns in praise of various deities have given rise to polytheism, henotheism and gradually to monotheism. The gods are presiding deities of various powers of natural forces. The primary gods mentioned in the Vedas are 33 gods, that is, 8 *Vasus*, 11 Rudras, 12 *Adityas* and 2 *Ashvinis*. The presiding deity of all gods is said to be Indra. The importance of all the gods led to polytheistic tendency. But, gradually, there rose the need to provide importance to one deity and thus lord of all beings was described as Praja*Pati*. Later, in the Upanisads we find the one absolute termed as Brahman.

2.4. SOME IMPORTANT VEDIC CONCEPTS - II

Here, we shall analyze some five specific important concepts that we derive from the above mentioned varied topics of the Vedas. The following concepts have served as the strong foundation for Indian Thinking and have highly influenced the religious and philosophical domains.

Sat and *Asat*

The fundamental quest of any thinking mind is to arrive at the prime cause of this vast multifarious creation. The Vedic seers had tried to find answers and have presented them in a riddled language. In this connection, the concept of *Sat* (Existent principle) and *Asat* (Non-existent principle) are described. We find statements in the Veda that say, 'there was *Sat* prior to the creation' and there is another statement that says 'there was *Asat* prior to the creation'. Such statements have given rise to various theories on the cause of creation. For instance, some consider that prior to creation there must be a sat principle, an existent principle since from an existing thing alone something can originate. Others hold the view that if there had been sat prior to creation, there will be the difficulty in stating the cause of that sat, hence it is said 'nothing' (*asat*) was there before creation. Now, these two fundamental concepts of 'Sat' and '*Asat'* gave rise to divided opinions which formed the foundation of Indian Philosophical systems in later period.

Mutual Triad

Another important concept is the mutual triad that has been derived in the Vedas based on the observation of Nature and its reaction. The simple concept derived from nature is the cyclic process in a chain and disturbance in any part of the chain ruins the entire process gradually or immediately. Based on this vital observation, the Vedas present the mutual triads, that is, the *adhyatmika* (individual), *adhibhautika* (the universe) and *adhidaivika* (the presiding principle). For instance let us take the five sense organs of knowledge and understand them at these three levels.

Adhyatmika	*Adhibhautika*	*Adhidaivika*
Eye (sense of sight)	Sense objects of colour	Surya (Sun)
Ear (sense of sound)	Sense objects of sound	Dik (God of Directions)
Skin (sense of touch)	Sense objects of touch, like hard, soft etc.	Vayu (Air)
Tongue (sense of taste)	Sense objects of taste, like	Varuna (Waters)

	sweet, sour etc	
Nose (sense of smell)	Sense objects of smell, like fragrance of rose etc.	Asvinis (Twin-gods)

For knowledge to take place, we need a functioning sense organs at the individual level, there must be the sense objects available in the external world, and also the need for the grace of the presiding deities. Only when this triad mutually functions, the knowledge of the world is gained. This concept of triad forms the basis of religious faith and practices.

Law of *Karma*

Another vital doctrine that evolved from the Vedas is the Law of *Karma*. It is initially referred to as '*Rta'* or the cosmic order and later termed as '*Satya'* or the invariable Truth. Further, it came to be widely known by the word '*Karma'*. *Karma* refers to both action and result of action. It works on certain universal principles, according to the Vedas. That is, every action gives result and every result is reaped through various experiences. The concept of *Dharma* is the primary determinant of *karma*. Hence, we find lot of importance given to *dharma* in the Vedas. The Karma and Dharma are inseparable factors of the rhythmic flow of the universe and all its beings. The ethical and moral codes come under *dharma* and the performance of the moral codes (as prescribed or its violation, that is, *dharma* and *adharma*) comes under *karma.* Here too a cyclic process is indicated wherein one performs karma, reaps karma phala (result) and that again leads to performance of karma. This chain, is said to continue not only in the present birth but is a chain with countless past births and future births. Thus, we have the theory of transmigration.

Theory of Transmigration

According to this theory, an individual being under the law of karma, assumes different physical bodies, that is, takes several births. This concept of the Vedas is imbedded in every religious act and ritual. An individual constantly tries to remove the past accumulated *adharma* (demerit) and seeks to nourish *dharma* (merit) in the present birth, which is believed to determine the future birth. The religion focuses on a *dharmic* living to ensure a safe future birth, whereas, the philosophers seek to exit from the cycle of births and deaths.

Vedic Designation

Apart from the religious and philosophical fervour, the Vedic society is also designed with a hope for a harmonious living. In this view, the Veda suggests the classification of a society based on the aptitude (*guna*) and profession (*karma*) of an individual, which is known as *Varna*. The other classification is based on the stage of life an individual passes through and it is known as *Ashrama*.

Vedas visualises the aptitude of the individuals broadly as four: knowledge-oriented, action-oriented (which is again in three ways, action for protection and administration and action for trading and commerce) service-oriented with skilled and semi-skilled actions. These four broad aptitudes are essential for any society and these aptitudes when designed into a profession, their functioning would take care of the individual interest and the interest of the society at large. The Vedas groups this as *varna* and names them as *Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya* and *Shudra* respectively. But, unfortunately in the fading of the Vedas, the vision of the Vedas too diminished and took the cruel form of caste system by which we are unable to free ourselves even in this 21st century.

From the stand of the different stages of life, again the Vedas classifies them into four, as the student-life (*Brahmacharyam*), married-life (*Grhastham*), retired-life (*Vanaprastham*) and mendicant-life (*Sanyasam*). These four are known as *Ashramas.* The four stages need not be compulsory; depending on the aptitude of an individual one may move from the first *ashrama* to the third or at times to the fourth. The dharma and karma prescribed in the varna-ashrama scheme vary which take care of the general duties and the specific duties, thus making the concept of dharma more complex and complicated.

2.5 UPANISADS

The Upanisads are the prime source of many philosophical conclusions. The word Upanisad can be split as *upa+ni+sat*; to mean '*upa'* – approaching a teacher; '*ni'* – for knowledge; '*sat'* – to attain liberation. Of more than 1180 upanisads, the popular and widely studied are the ten Upanisads, namely, Isa, Kena, Katha, Prashna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya and Brihdaranyaka. We shall briefly see the important doctrines as found in these upanisads.

The Upanisads present Brahman as the absolute reality and the substratum of the universe. Brahman is revealed as both the material and intelligent cause of the universe. Upanisads employ two ways of defining Brahman, one in its own nature (*svarupa lakshana*), that is, Brahman as the Consciousness, Existent and Bliss principle. The second definition is from its accidental attributes (*tatastha lakshana*) wherein Brahman is shown as the substratum of origination, sustenance and resolution of the universe. Various methodologies are used by the Upanisads to arrive at the absolute reality and one such method we find in the Aitareya Upanisad is known as superimposition and negation (*adhyaropa* and *apavada*). The world and its objects are superimposed initially and after the revelation of the non-difference between the effect and its material cause, the world is negated as non-existent in the substratum. Further, there is the description of the world, the individual self and the creator of the universe in the Upanisads. The method of moving from the gross to the subtle is employed in the Taittiriya Upanisad. Here, the nature of self is analysed beginning from the gross physical body leading to the subtlest Consciousness. Some important images like the chariot and bow-arrow, are presented in Kathopanisad and Mundakopanisad respectively. The Upanisads uniformly present the triple means to a seeker of truth, they are, listening to the scriptures (*shravana*), pondering on the teaching so as to remove doubts and misconceptions (*manana*) and dwelling on the

teaching (*nididhyasana*). Mostly, the Upanisads are set in a dialogue between a teacher and a disciple and the teaching is gradual and progressive. The various Upanisads consistently deal with one subject-matter of that absolute truth.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) Examine some of the Basic Concepts of the Vedas that influenced the religious and philosophical thinking of India.

…………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………….

2) What is the role of the Upanisads? Give an outline of the contents of the Upanisads.

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………...

……………………………………………………………………………………….

2.6 LET US SUM UP

Vedas or the source of knowledge, is also referred to as the *Sruti.* The content of the Vedas that has come down to us for centuries is said to have been heard by the sages in deep meditation and these sages are therefore known as '*mantradrastas'* or the 'seer of the mantras'. The word 'Veda' generally refers to 'Mantras' and 'Brahmanas'. Mantras are hymns in praise of gods who are invoked in a ritual and Brahmanas are those portions which give various instructions on the performance of rituals. The Aranyakas deals with meditation which is generally taken up while living in forest (*aranya*). The Upanisads reveal the Absolute Truth, which provides the means to liberation and is popularly known as the 'Vedanta.' The Vedic Literature is vast with several branches and sections. The Vedic concepts and doctrines have highly influenced the religious and philosophical thinking of India. Some of the concepts are the definition of *Sat* and *Asat*. The most influential concepts are the law of karma and the concept of dharma that reflect the social condition of Vedic period.

The Upanisads employ two ways of defining Brahman, one in its own nature (*svarupa lakshana*), that is, Brahman as the Consciousness, Existent and Bliss principle. The second definition is from its accidental attributes (*tatastha lakshana*) wherein Brahman is shown as the substratum of origination, sustenance and resolution of the universe. The Upanisads uniformly present the triple means to a seeker of truth; they are, *shravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana*. Mostly, the Upanisads are set in a dialogue between a teacher and a disciple and the teaching is gradual and progressive.

2.7 KEY WORDS

Veda: source of knowledge

Samhita: a collection of mantras or *suktas*

Brahmana: that portion which prescribes rules and regulations for rituals

Aranyaka: it gives the detail of meditations

Upanisad: it conducts a philosophical quest

2.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Dasgupta, S. N., *A History of Indian Philosophy,* Vol.I, Motilal Banarasidass, New Delhi, 1988.

Hiriyanna, M., *Outlines of Indian Philosophy,* Motilal Banarasidass, New Delhi, 2005.

Vaidya, C. V., *History of Vedic Literature,* Sahitya Academy, Kolkata, 1992.

UNIT 3 INTRODUCTION TO TIRUKKURAL

Contents

3.0 OBJECTIVES

As objective scholars on Indian philosophy would vouche for a fact that Indian culture is not built upon only one tradition. Neither monopoly of one religious tradition within India nor of one linguistic tradition would be acceptable in the plurality of Indian traditions. Sources of Indian philosophy are spread about many religious, philosophical and moral treatises, both written and oral, in various ancient languages like Pali, Prakrit, Sanskrit and Tamil. Apart from the stereotyped treatment on dwelling only on Sanskrit tradition for Indian philosophical thoughts, this unit emphatically proclaims the deep philosophical insights embedded in classical Tamil text called *Tirukkural.* The objective of this unit is to bring out the moral, social and political philosophy of *Tirukkural.* The unit would mostly avoid the introductory details about the text and concentrate fully on its philosophical insights for want of space. Such a brief introduction on *Tirukkural* could be found in the unit on ancient Dalit thinkers in one of the elective courses of IGNOU MA philosophy under the title, Dalit philosophy. The numbers given within bracket in the sentences of this unit refer to the number of couplet of *Tirukkural.*

3.1 INTRODUCTION

'*Tirukkural'* etymologically means the 'holy couplets,' i.e. a text having two lines with seven words each in the Tamil poetic '*venba'* metre. It has 1330 couplets with 133 chapters each containing 10 couplets. Tiruvalluvar did not write autobiography nor any authentic biographies are available there is no perfect life-sketch of Tiruvalluvar. A few information about his life are passed on orally. He lived at Mylapore, Chennai, engaged in weaving as his profession, married to a maid known as Vasuki. Certain events that are purported to have taken place in his life seem to be unbelievable. *Tirukkural* is a moral compendium which has been classified under three major headings; *aram* (righteousness)*, porul* (wealth)*, ibam* (enjoyment). The ideological implication of these titles is that one must earn wealth through righteous means and enjoyment becomes imminent through that which leads to enlightenment. This view is similar to the Sanskrit tradition of *dharma, artha, kama* and *moksa.*

3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHTS OF TIRUKKURAL

Tiruvalluvar's philosophy is that of common man and hence he developed his ideals in such a manner that man ought to live as a true human being and cherish all the human values, promote earthly virtues, establish social harmony, engage in domestic life, follow political ideologies, develop mutual assistance, adhere to the life of renunciation, enjoy all kinds of pleasures, contemplate deeply on a few metaphysical issues etc.

In the invocatory chapter known as 'the Praise of God,' Tiruvalluvar glorifies the significant features of God: He is the ancient Lord or the Supreme Being; Lord with perfect intelligence; Flower decked God; He who has transcended likes and dislikes; *Iraivan* – the protector of the universe; unparalleled Lord; the embodiment of righteousness; Lord endowed with Eight attributes; He who has annihilated the onslaught of the senses; the great controller of the living beings.

Nowhere does the author mention the Lord with his specific name, probably to teach mankind about the relationship between God, human beings and the world. Had he mentioned the name of God, then people would think that the moral philosophy of Tiruvalluvar is based on the preachings of that particular religion whose God's name has been mentioned. Since Tiruvalluvar wanted to establish a society where people belonging to all religious sects should lead a peaceful and harmonious life, he had explicated the need of monotheistic divinity. Still scholars taking into consideration few religious expressions found in the couplets proclaim that such expressions unequivocally indicate their God and therefore Tiruvalluvar belongs to their religious cult and his moral thought are pertaining to their religion. If Tiruvalluvar is confined to a particular religion, then the universalistic outlook of his moral ideologies would be misnomer.

In the chapter on "The Dread of Beggary,' he explaines: If the Supreme Lord who has created this world has destined that man should continue to live through begging, then let that Lord wander about the world and perish."(1062). In this verse Tiruvalluvar links the life of penury and poverty leading to the act of begging and the person who is responsible for this degradation and curses Him to go away from this world. Thus Tiruvalluvar wants to behold that mankind should have a self-contained life. Tiruvalluvar has mentioned the fact that the universe has been created by God.

Tiruvalluvar deliberately did not write anything about *moksa* or liberation. Probably, he might have thought that life on this earth is to be lived perfectly and honestly than contemplating upon life beyond death. According to the commentators, since *moksa* is concerned with a blissful state of experience, it cannot be explained in adequate terms. As such there are no authentic reports about the state of liberation, but many theoretical accounts are available through revelations of the mystic saints. Hence Tiruvalluvar might have thought that any one who is virtuous in his domestic, social, political and moral spheres, he will certainly experience abundant joy in every aspect of life, *veedu peru*. The *kama* or *inbam* (pleasure) described by Tiruvalluvar in the third section is to be understood in terms of leading to the everlasting and increasing bliss. At the worldly level we have physical pleasure and mental happiness, but at the spiritual plane, which is mystic in nature and essence, the rapture is to be experienced rather than explained. Hence ,Tiruvalluvar wants every human being to concentrate on the life on earth than contemplating on a heavenly life.

Another interesting feature of this famous text is that its author has not used anywhere the terms such as Tamil language, Tamilian, Tamil country, though all the 1330 couplets are in chaste Tamil language. There are totally 9310 Tamil words used in this work. In the first couplet itself Tiruvalluvar resorts to his intention of spreading his message for mankind: "The world of sound commences with the letter 'A'. Similarly all that exists in the world commence from the Prime Mover."

In several places the author uses the expressions like '*ulaku' 'ulakam' 'vaiyam' 'jnalam'* etc., to refer to the world. His love for mankind and fascination to find out man as living as a genuine human, without social discrimination, linguistic fanaticism, racial inequealities, political turmoils, religious fundamentalism, moral disturbances, mental imbalances, regional dissimilarities, national prejudices, economic upheavel, geographical divisions etc., are found in every couplet. He delves deeply on almost all the aspects of human life. At several places he indicates that man should not live through the senses which is nothing but the life of brutish beasts. He expects man to use his sixth sense viz., mind to sort out all human issues and lead a life of spirituality which will bring forth a life of tranquility and solace to all human woes. In preface to his translation of *Tirukkural* VVS Aiyar states, "Tiruvalluvar has given to the world a work to which, in perfection of form, profoundity of thought, nobleness of sentiment, and earnestness of moral purpose…"

The last section of this grand work deals exclusively with the various aspects of domestic life especially the inner part of it known as conjugal love, He divides this section into two divisions, first speaks about pre-marital love and the second about married life. This shows that the ancient Tamils have developed grammar not only for the external life of human beings, but also for the internal living.

3.3 MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

Very cleverly Tiruvalluvar refers to virtue in two different but similar terms, viz., *aram* and *aran.* The title of the chapter is emphasis on *aran* which means the glorification of righteousness. The subtle difference between these two terms is that *aram* means the definition of virtue. For instance, avoidance of jealously, greediness, wrath and abusive language is the best way to acquire *aram* (35). As contrast he reiterates that domestic life is exclusively that is practiced as *aran:* life not blamed by others but earning good name (49). When abundant love and *aran* prevail at home, they are the quality and benefit of family life (45). Promoting purity of heart without any blemish whatsoever is the best way of living; the other so called *aran* are nothing but empty display (34). However both these terms viz., *aram* and *aran* indicate virtue, the former is used to refer to the definition of righteousness, while the former its fulfillment or utlity. However, one can notice the difficulty of the author is not giving a positive meaning or definition of righteousness. The Absence of certain ignorable traits such as anger, jealously etc., is to be understood as *aram.*

In the life of a man his individual life, socio-political life, romantic life are playing a vital life. The first section is pertaining to individual ethics, with the sub-divisions such as domestic virtue, ascetic virtue and fate. The second section is concerned with political ethics which ahs the true meaning, *poral* of life. It has the headings of royalty, ministers of state and appendix. The third section pertains to conjugal love with the pre-marital love and wedded love as the divisions. The first section ends

with the chapter on fate. Man has to llive in accordance to his destiny. 'Although a man may study the most polished treatises, the knowledge which fate has decreed to him will still prevail.' (373). There are through fate two different nature in the world, hence the difference observable in men in their acquisition of wealth in their attainment of knowledge. There seems to be a contradiction in the conception of fate by Tiruvalluvar. In this chapter he holds that 'what is stronger than fate? If we think of an expedient to avert it, it will itself be with us before the th ought. (380). However in the chapter on manly effort he maintains that 'they will labour on, without fear and without fainting will see even fate out behind their back.' (620). In the first one the author gives a generic truth that fate is more powerful and difficult to over come. In the other couplet he gives a specific truth that if one strive with undismayed and unfaltering mind that person will curtail the impact of fate. Hence one should not keep inactive leaving everything to destiny.

The second section ends with the chapter on baseness, *kayamai.* The contents of this chapter reveal the truth that even during the time of Tiruvalluvar the society has been degraded. In any social setting if there the vile people with malevolent attitude and highly despicable character predominate, then naturally that society would lose respect. Tiruvalluvar uses highly contemptuous language to describe the attitude of the degenerates. It would be very difficult to distinguish between the men of base and honest people since the base resemble the celestials; for they act as they like. The principle of behavior in the mean is chiefly fear; if not, hope of gain, to some extent. The great bestow their alms as soon as they are informed; but the mean, like the sugar-cane, only when they are tortured to death. The base will hasten to sell themselves as soon as a calamity has befallen them. For what else are they gifted? Thus it is clear that the individuals have to promote all noble traits so that the socio-political organizations would be free from the highly despicable men.

Though Tiruvalluvar's primary concern is to make mankind perfect and virtuous through various means, he seems tobe a lover of nature. In the chapter of the excellence of Rain, he glorifies the importance of rain, water, sky, celestials, food, ploughing, clouds, annual festivals, daily worship, penance, almsgiving, duties of life which are basically related with water. The method of water management formulated by Tiruvalluvar shows his human concern. 'By the continuance of rain, the world is preserved in existence; it is therefore worthy to be called ambrosia.(11). Further, if it be said that the duties of life cannot be discharged by anyone without water, so also without rain no flowing water is possible. (20).

One such famous chapter in the *Tirukkural* is 'the greatness of the Ascetics' wherein the author asserts the ultimate goal of life through ethical discipline mingled with renunciation. All treatises in the world uniformly emphasise the greatness of those who abide by the code of conduct unique to their state of existence who have relinguished all desires. It is not possible to describe the measure of those who hasve renounced. If done so, it would b e like counting the dead. Those who have realized the importance of the two-fold nature of existence will excel others. He who controls his five senses by the look of wisdom will be a seed in the world of heaven.

Indiran, the Lord of the celestial is the best example for strengthening his will by way of controlling the five senses. Only the men of wisdom can achieve greatness, while the men of mean mindedness can seldom achieve. He who knows the qualities of

taste, sight, touch, audition and smell alone can abide by the intricacies of the world. The greatness of the men of efficient knowledge through hidden language can be revealed by their insipiriting utterances. It would be impossible to resist the wrath even for a moment of those who have scaled themountain of goodness. The *Andhanars* are none other than the men of virtues since they show kindness to all living species.

The moral philosophy of Tiruvalluvar is found in all the sections such as domestic virtues, ascetic virtues, fate, royal virtues, appendix etc. The individual virtues which are essentially ethical are associated with social and political morality since both these institutions are meant for promoting the welfare of the individuals. Life starts with love. As a nessential feature of all aspects of life is love. Since love is related to virtue, Tiruvalluvar maintains that virtue will burn up the human person whichis devoid of love even as the Sun burns up the creature which is without bones, (worms). (77) Most of the problems emerge due to the usage of abusive language. Tiruvalluvar insists that one should always utter pleasant words and should refrain from using filthy language. Here also Tiruvalluvar combines the notion of virtue. The sins of a man will vanish and the virtues in crease provided he cultivates the habit of speaking sweet words (88). We should also not forget the favour received from some one since gratitude is related to the knowledge of benefits conferred. He who has annihilated every virtue may yet survive; there is no redemption for him who has killed a benefit. (110).

Impartiality is a moral virtue which expects all human beings to treat others like themselves which is especially applicable to the merchants. The ornament of the wise is not to devitate from impartiality and maintain balance like the ever-fixed scale. (119). One must possess self-restriction to lead a peaceful life. Like the tortoise one must control the five senses; the role of a man with self-restriction is greater than mountain. All problems emerge due to the non-control of tongue and hence one must guard his tongue. Disciplilne and decorum are very essential for a human being since they are treated greater than life. Propriety of conduct is the seed of virtue; impropriety will ever cause sorrow (138). Not coveting another's wife, the possession of patience or forbearance, not envying, not coveting, not back biting, the not speaking of profitless words, the dread of evil deeds, the knowing of what is suitable for a man's status, offering, fame are some of the virtues associated with family life.

In the ascetic virtues we have the following chapters; The possession of benevolence, the relinquishing of meat, penance, inconsistent conduct, the absence of fraud, veracity, the not being angry, non-indulgence of evil, non-killing, instability, renunciation, knowledge of the true, the extirpation of desire and fate. Among the above topics, the term '*vaymai'* is significant in the sense that it is equated with truth commonly. But Tiruvalluvar gives a unique definition of ' *vaymai'* thus; 'veracity' is nothing but non-utterance of words causing evil to other. (291). Purity of the external body is caused by water and inner purity is caused by veracity. Now it is clear that unless a person develops inner purity he cannot but resist the usage of abusive words. Only a man of internal purification will speak in a perfect manner without offending any body. Even falsehood has the nature of veracity, if it brings forth faultless benefit. He who promotes deceitless conductin in his mind certainly dwell in the minds of all. In this context Tiruvalluvar points out the avoidance of falsehood. The faultlesslamp of wisdom caused by veracity is the true lamp of the world. To those who eat meat

Tiruvalluvar first asks people not to eat meat so that the butchers will not kill animals for the sake of eating meat.

3.4 SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

As it is generally known social ideologies cannot exist and survive without being followed and patronized by individuals. Tiruvalluvar's message for the social well-being of people is found in several couplets. In the chapter on cherishing guests. It is not proper to keep the guests outside his residence even though he were eating the food of immortality. (82). He who having entertained the guests who have visited him, looks out for other guests to visit, will certainly be a welcome guest to the celestial beings. (86). In the sectionon wealth in association with political thought Tiruvalluvar speaks of social virtues. The processof getting education, non-learning, listening to others, the possession of knowledge, the correction of faults, seeking the guidance of great people, avoidance of mean minded people, acting after realization, knowing the power, knowing the place, knowing the time, clarification with enlightenement, engagement after-realization, cherishing one's kindred, unforgetfulness, unsluggishness, personality endeavours, withstanding in trouble, method of acquiring wealth, friendship, investigation in making friendship, familiarity, evil friendship, unwanted friendship, folly, ignorance, hostitlity, themight of hatred, knowing the efficiency of enmity, internal enmity, non offending the great, being led by women, wanton women, non drinking of toddy, gambling, medicine, nobility, honour, greatness, perfectness, noble qualities, wealth without benefaction, shamefulness, the way of maintaining the family, agriculture, poverty, mendicancy, the dread of mendicancy and baseness.

The literal meaning of the word '*porul'* is wealth. But it also indicates the meaning of life. Tiruvalluvar expects that human beings must live with fellowmen amicably and peacefully. The first and foremost requirement for executing this ideal is education which is themanifestation of perfection already in men. Every one should learn the subject matter without any blemish, and learn selectively, but ultimately his conduct should be worthy of his learning (291). Water will emerge from the sand-well in proportion to the depth to which is dug; likewise knowledge will flow from a man in proportion to his learning. According to Tiruvalluvar illiteracy leads to ignorance and it is a sin. As beasts by the side of men, so are other men by the side of those who are learned in celebrated works. (410). As a method of learning and acquiring knowledge Tiruvalluvar emphasizes the process of listening. In his opinion the wealth of wealth is that which is heard by the ear; that wealth is the major wealth. (411). He condemns the people who tastes the food seriously than tasting the message heard throught he ear. (420).

The culmination of education, listening etc, is nothing but the possession of knowledge, leading to wisdom. The frequeent55ly quoted verse (423) declares thus; To discover the truth, uttered by any person, listened to by any person, is real wisdom. Most of fear what ought to be feared is folly; it is the work of the wise to fear what should be feared. (428). The noble gesture of the men of wisdom is to correct the faults of fellowmen, as well as in themselves. Those who fear guilt, if they commit a faulty small as a millet seed, will considered it to be as large as a palmyra tree (433). In a society none can decide anything individually. Seeking the aid of great men is essentially required for guidance and decision making. This quality is to be preferred

by the rulers. So to act as to make those men, his own, who are greater than himself is of all powers the highest (444). To achieve this welcome virtue one must avoid the company of the mean minded fellows. This is no greater help than the company of the good. There is no greater source of sorrow than the company of the wicked. (460) No action should be performed in haste but after due considerationof the pros and cons of that action. Tiruvalluvar insists that before engaging inan action one should contemplate seriously and then proceed. After having undertaken it, to say, “we will consider’ is a stupid way of talking, (467), one must realize his power and ability before executing an action. Even if the peacock feathers are loaded excessively, the axle of that vehicle will break (475). Equally one must realize the appropriate time while performing an act. If a person acts in the right time and at the right place, he can conquer the world and acoomplish it (484). Similarly is the case in knowing the right place for action. Tiruvalluvar substantiates this vies: Wide chariots with mighty wheels willnot turn on the ocean; neither will the ships that traverse ocean, move on the earth (496). One must know and realize the conditions of life whichi are based on righteousness, wealth, pleasure and fear of life (death). For trusting a fellow without examination and oubting a fellow after choosing for the assignment, both will create irremediable sorrow. (510). Similarly one should realize and employ right person for right action. After having considered, ‘this man can accomplish this, by these means,’ let the master leave with im the discharge of that duty. There is a famous proverb in Tamil – ‘living with kith and kin will fetch crores of benefits.’ Tiruvalluvar in a decade extols the greatness of cherishing one’s kindred. Even when a man’s property is lost, his relatives will move with him with their accustomed kindness. Though people consider forgetting as a boon, Tiruvalluvar on the contrary wants the people not to develop the habit of forgetting. For forgetfulness will destroy one’s name and fame, even as constant poeverty destroys knowledge, (532).

Benignity is a grand virtue. For kind loons are the ornaments of the eyes. Those who devise to cultivate that degree of civilization which all shall prefer, even after swallowing the posion served to them by their friends; such persons will be friendly even with them. (580). Tiruvalluvar also insists upon developing strength and energy to fulfill one’s mission on earth. With an analogy he elucidates this concept. Even as the flower stretches asper the depth of water, the greatness of human beings will be determined by their mental strength. (588). This virtues is followed by unsluggishness. People are expected to give up idelenss and be brisk always. Those who through idelenss and do not engage themselves in dignified extension, will subject themselves to troubles and reproaches. (608). Promoting power and untiring activities will culminate in personality development. To encourage people Tiruvalluvar brings in divinity. Even if something could not be achieved by divine sources, one can triumph and obtain the reward through constant labour and continued bodily extentions. (618). Even if fate confronts a man with suffering one should not give up hope. In troubles too one should develop steadfastness and try to wipe out troubles. Such people will give sorrow to sorrow itself who in sorrow do not suffer in sorrows.

3.5 POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF TIRUVALLUVAR

Man is a political animal; for peaceful living in a social good governance is a pre-requiste. To protect people from external dangers and internal threats, people need a good state with all equipments. Tiruvalluvar devotes several decades of verses to highlight the salient features of political ideologies.

The section on wealth commences with the significant features of royal personality especially the greatness of a king or ruler. A king has to possess an army, citizens, wealth, ministers, friends asnd a fortress. Such a king will be treated as a lion among kings. This is the grammar of politics. (381). A ruler must promote the quality of manly modesty and should not swerve from virtue but refrain from Vice (384). The ruler who spends his time and energy with duty consciousness in protecting his subjects will be adored as a God among men. (388). The other virtues elucidated for social well being of people are equally applicable for the king and ministers too. While seeking the guidance of great men, a king must be always in the company of noble men selected by him for the prosperity of his domain. Otherwise, he will perish even though there be no one to defeat or destroy him. (448).

A ruler must be vigilant and always be aware of the poer of his army, his enemy etc, before ventuiring into any act. There is nothing which may not be accomplished by those whol, beofer they attack an enemy, make thmesleves aquainted with their own ability, and with whatever else is needful to be known, and apply themselves wholly to their goal. (472). Equally is important the intend of knowing the appropriate time. Valluvur explains this virtue with an analogy. A crow will conquer an owl in the day time; thus aking has to analyse the suitable time before conquering his enermies. (481). While selecting the ministers the ruler must be very conscious of their skill and bility. According to Tiruvalluvar, let a minister be chosen, after he has been tried by means of the following four qualities, virtue, attachement towards money, indulgence in sexual pleasure and fear of losing life. (501).

In the chapter on the Right scepter Tiruvalluvar gives a vivid picture about the method of ruling the country. Even as the living beings live happily6 when there is good down-pouring, the citizens will live happily when the king rules his domain justly. (542). Again for a king to punish the criminals with severe punishements, is like the pulling up of the weeds in the green field. (550). Similarly a king is to avoid the quality of the cruel scepter. The country of the king who does not dailyl examine into the wrongs done and distribute justice, will daily fall to runit. (553). Again when the people shed tears unable to bear the torture from a cruel king, on that day itself the wealth of the king will vanich. (555). Another important duty of the ruler is to protect his domain from terrosrism. If he could not control and contain the onslaught of the terrorists, Tiruvalluvar warns that peace will be out of focus from his terroritory. The king should engage detectives to check the activities of the unruly masses and bring forth peace in his country. He is a spy who watches all men, to wit those who are in the king’s employment, his relatives and his enemies. (584).

In the sub section on Ministers of state, Tiruvalluvar emphatically asserts the office of the minister of state to assist the smoth administration of the kingdom in association with the king. He is one who is able to comprehend the whole nature of an undertaking, execute it in the best manner possible and offer assuring advice in time of necessity. (634). A minister must hasve the ability to communicate powerfully so that he can win over the confidence of his matter and fellowmen. It is impossible for

any one to conquer him by intriguing who does posses power of oratory asnd is neither faulty nor timid. (647). Tiruvalluvar elucidates the purity of action, the power of action and the method of acting.

The ruler is expected to maintain good relationship with the neighbouring countries and mutual friendship and territorial integhretiy are to preserved. For this purpose the role of the envoy becomes inevitable. Since Tiruvalluvar has realized this necessity in ten couplets he describes the feature of sending emissaries to the neighbouring countries for peaceful co existence. The qualifications of an ambassador are love of fellowmen, a fitting birth and the possession of abilities being acceptable to royalty. (681). A person who does possess the following virtues alone is eligible to be sent on a mission to foreign countries: an embodiment of wisdom, natural temperament for investigation and excellent learning. (684) The minister is always expected to be in the companyof the king and advise him during the time of crisis. An excellent comparison is made by Tiruvalluvar regarding the relationship between the king and the minister. Minsiters who serve iunder the fickle-minded monarchs should be neither too far nor too near like those who warn themselves at the fix. (691). While in the presence of the sovereign, ministers should neither whisper to nor smile at others. (694).

Another essential requirement of a minister is to know through indication. Accordingl to Tiruvalluvar, the minister who by looking at the king understands his mind without being told of it will be a perpetual ornament to the world which is surrounded by never drying ocean. (701). The minister also should have a thorough knowledge about the movements of his subordinates. This kind of understanding will enable him to be cautitious about the spies and internal dangers. For a to blunder in the presence of those who hasve acquired a vast store of learning and know the value thereof is like a good man stumbling and failing away from the path of virtue. (781). Also the minister is not expected to exhibit any kind of dread before the council. In order to reply fearlessly before a foreign court, ministers should learn the logical method according to the rules of grammar. (725).

In the sub-division of the essentials of a state Tiruvalluvar first defines what is a state. A state is constituted of perfect cultivation, virtuous persons and merchants with inexhaustible wealth. All these must be good together always. (731). Again, freedom from epidemics, wealth, produce, happiness and protection to subjects are the fine jewels for a country. (738). Tiruvalluvar also portrays the nature of a fort. A fort is that which has an extensive space within, but only small places tobe guarded and such as can destroy the courage of the besieging foes. (744). The minister should also know the technique of accumulating wealth. The chief wealth of the king is an well equipped army which completes its mission in the battle field without fear of wounds. (761). The kingdom should fee proud about its military spiritu. It is more pleasant to hold the dart that has missed an elephant that which has hit a hare in the forest. (772).

Tiruvalluvar brings to light the deep intricacies of masking friendship after propoer investigation whom we have to consider as our friends. He wants people to give up evil friendship which may drive people to untold sufferings. He also distinguishes between genuine friendship and unreal friendship. In several couplets he describes various facts about familiarity. Intimate friendship is that which cannot in the least be injured by things done through the right of long standing intimacy. (801). He also

elucidates the significant features of folly, ignorance, hostility, the might of hatred, knowing the ability of hatredness, enmity withing, not offending the great, being led by women, wanton women, not drinking toddy, not indulging in gambling and medicine. In the last chapter the author suggests various means to avoid diseases, the method of treatment, diet etc. Let the physician enquire first into thenature of the discease, its cause and its method of cure and treat a patient faithfully according to methical rules. (848)

In the section on appendix Tiruvalluvar discusses about the general issues whicha re to be realized by the citizens for a comfortable and peaceful living such as nobility. The high born will never deviate from these three virtues; good manners, truthfulness and modesty (952), honour, greatness, perfectness, courtesy, wealth without benediction, shamefulness, the way of maintain the family, agriculture, poevery, mendicancy, the dread of mendicancy, and basensess. The whol ambit of this work is to make people perfect int heir endeavours and free freom base mentality. He contemptuously scolds the mean-minded fellows. In contrast to the perfect ones, he holds (1078). The great people willbestow their alms as soon as they are informed; but the mean, like the sugar cane, only when they are tortured to death.

3.6 LET US SUM UP

Tirukkural reflects the genius of the Tamils in a remarkable way. It is at once ideal and practical, of the earthy as well as highly imaginative, simple as well as subtle, prosaic, matter of fact, earnest and forthright as well as highly poetic and emotional as is apparent in the third book dealing with love. Tiruvalluvar's moral philosophy is anthropo-centric exclusively since its focus is on life on this earth rather than aspiring for heavenly abode. Tiruvalluvar is more concerned with the problems of life and ideal solutions of for socio-political and moral issues. He was totally opposed to absolutizing and idealizing the problems and making it a other worldy affairs.

3.7 KEY WORDS

Aram: Righteousness

Porul: Wealth

Inbam: Happiness

Veedu: Release or Liberation

3.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Thiruvalluvar. *Thirukkural*, trans. W. H. Drew and John Lazarus. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2007.

Thiruvalluvar. *Thirukkural: Pearls of Inspiration*, trans. M. Rajaram. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., 2009.

Diaz, S.M. Trans. *Tirukkural*, Vol.1-2. Coimbatore: Ramanandha Adigalar Foundation, 2005.

Drew, W. H. and John Lazarus. *Thirukkural*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2007.

Gopalan, S. *The Social Philosophy of Tirukkural*. Madras: Affliated East-West Press Pvt. Ltd., 1935.

Krishnaswami, O. R. *The Wisdom of Thirukkural: A Guide to living*. Mumbai: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 2004.

Mahapatra, Ranganayaki, P. Bhanumathi, and Sukla Chakrabarti. *Studies in Tirukkural*. Calcutta: Tamil Department, Calcutta University, 1996.

Meenakshisundaram, T. P. "Philosophy of Tiruvalluvar" in *Thirumathi Sornammal Endowment Lectures on Tirukkural*, ed. M. V. Venugopala Pillai, 211-322. Madras: University of Madras, 1971.

Narayanasamy, J. *Thirukkural* (*Transliteration*). Chennai: Sura Pathippagam, 2008.

Perumal, V. *Educational Philosophy of Thiruvalluvar*. Bangalore: Panpagam, 1989.

Pillai, Rao Sahib K. Kothandapani Pillai. "Thirukkural – Kamathuppal" in *Thirumathi Sornammal Endowment Lectures on Tirukkural*, ed. M. V. Venugopala Pillai, 107-210. Madras: University of Madras, 1971.

Radhakrishnan, K. R. "Thirukkural and the Philosophy of Thiruvalluvar" in *Kalai Malar*, ed. S. Annamalai, 25-37. Howrah: Thiruvalluvar Kalai Manram, 1963.

Rajagopalachari, C. "The Tiru-k-kural" in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. 2, 530-535. Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1975.

Rajagopalachari, C. *Kural*: *The Great Book of Tiruvalluvar*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1970.

Rajaram, M. *Thirukkural: Pearls of Inspiration*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., 2009.

Reddiar, N. *Collected Papers*. Madras: Paari Nilayam, 1985.

Sreenivasan, Kasthuri. *Tirukkural: An Ancient Tamil Classic*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1969.

Munisami, V. *Thirkural Thelivuorai*. Chennai: Thirunavukarasu, 1989.Parimelalager. *Thirukkural – Thirukkural* (in Tamil). Chennai: Thirunavukarasu, 1986.

UNIT 4 INTRODUCTION TO EPICS, *PURANAS* AND *BHAGAVAT GITA*

Contents

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The unit attempts to give a general outlook of the popular scriptures of Indian tradition namely the epics, *puranas* and the Gita. The popularity of them is due to their narrative style with illustrations, mythological stories and dialogical forms. They do contain high philosophical notions, but given in a popular language. Emotional attachment and devotion towards personal deities and God are the general outcome of this sort of literature.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Sanskrit tradition, scriptures are divided into two types: Revealed Texts (*Sruti – what is heard*) and Remembered Texts (*Smrti – what is remembered).* The four Vedas and 108 Upanishads come under the *Sruti* category and *Bhagavat Gita*, 18 *Puranas*, *Sastras, Tantras*, *Agamas* and many others, come under *Smrti* category. *Smrti* literally means recollection or memory. It is a secondary authority; it derives its authority form *sruti*. Its object is to expand and exemplify the principles of *sruti* or the Vedas. The *smriti* consist of Gita, *Brahma Sutra*, *Itihasas* (epics), *Puranas* (chronicles and legends), *Sastras* (codes of law), *Agamas* and *Tantras* (manuals of worship). The distinction between *sruti* and *smrti* is important for two following reasons; 1. In case of conflicting views, *Sruti*'s views will hold good. 2. Without requiring any change in the *sruti,* the *smrti*s preserve the authority admitting changes in it.

Agamas

Agamas are that which has been handed down as a tradition. These are the scriptures dealing with the worship of a particular aspect of God. They prescribe detailed courses of discipline for the worshipper. Each agama consists of four sections. They are philosophy, mental discipline, rules for the construction of temples and images, religious practices. The agamas are divided into three according to the deity that is worshipped. The Vaisnava *agamas* (also called the *pancaratra* and *vaikhanasa agamas*) for Vishnu, the *Saiva Agamas* for *siva* and the *sakta agamas* (*tantra*s) for *sakti*. Each glorifies its particular deity.

Sastras

These are codified laws regulating the society from time to time. The important law givers are: *Manu, Yajnavalkya and Parasara*. Their codes of law are known as *Sastras*. *Dharmasastra* constitutes another very important source of Indian ethics and philosophy in which detailed rules of conduct and practical moral instructions are given. *Manusmrti*: according to Manu by following *dharma* one attains perfection. Manu prescribes duties for all the four stages of life and four different categories of persons in the society. This book of Manu comprises the laws of Manu which has become Aryan laws. Manu is considered to be great law giver in Vedic period. The code of conduct has three divisions; rituals, discharge of social responsibility and atonement for sins. They contain 'prescription and proscription.' They are like constitution and penal code. They emphasize two aspects of life; '*dharmic'* and social. The role of ritual is restricted to individual life; household work to be precise. These codes have some rigidity imposed in their interpretation and implementation. Fixation of duties and emphasis upon duties resemble, to great extent, the directive principles enshrined in the constitution. While four-fold division of society is one type, fourfold division of individual life is another. *Smriti* is very clear about not only four classes, but also four stages (*brahmacharya, garhastya, vaanaprastha and samnyasa*) in the life of an individual. There is no scope for switching from one position to another in a random manner. This will help us to infer the kind of political system which *smriti* supported. Surely, *smriti* did not support democratic system, though during *Vedic* age democratic system flourished.

4.2 *ITIHASAS* - EPICS

Itihasa is epics. The two well-known and popular epics from Sanskrit tradition are the Ramayana by Valmiki, and the Mahabharata by Vyasa. Though the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are two epics which have influenced literature for several centuries in all parts of India. The *Ramayana* accepts the principles of *Sanatana Dharma* and duties of ruler in particular. The aim of the epics is to drive home to all the laws of the *smrtis* and the principles of the *sruti* by means of the exploits of their great national heroes – Rama and Krisna. The Ramayana is the account of the deeds of a divinely great hero who set an example for the entire human race. It deals with ideal conditions of humanness a sense of brotherhood obedience to moral law firmness of character, honesty, sacrifice and unbounded goodness. Mahabharatha has a more profound theme which involves history, mythology, ethics and metaphysics. It is the history of Bharadas, a royal family of North Indian which divided into 2 parties, pandavas and Gauravas, and so the war breaks out between them. It is an encyclopedia of Hindu dharma.

The epics are essentially different from the early Vedic literatures. They arose not among the priestly classes but among traditional bards called *sutas*. These also served as charioteers who witnessed the actual battle-scenes and described them at first-hand in their ballads. They are martial poetry, concerned not with the praise of deities but of kings and nobles, not connected with the details of sacrifices, but with events like wars, and imbued not with higher philosophical motives, but with the practical purpose of gaining some reward from the audience before whom they were recited. We do not have them in their original and untampered form. They are added to by different hands at different periods. To the nucleus many pieces of the ancient bardic poetry containing legends connected or unconnected with the life of the epic heroes, of sacred poetry dealing with numerous myths and legends of brahmanical origin.

And large sections devoted to philosophy and ethics, cosmologies and genealogies in the fashion of *puranas*, legends, fables and parables. These additions indicate the great popularity which this epic has enjoyed at all times. The zealous spirit of compliers to bring together all that could be collected in it.

The three dimensional view of Mahabharata – on mundane plane, the story deals with the realistic account of a fierce war or annihilation with its interest centred on the epic characters. The meaning on the ethical plan views the war as a conflict between the principles of *dharma* and *adharma*, between good and evil, between justice and injustice, in which the contending parties are regarded as incarnations of *devas* and *asuras* and the war ends in the victory of dharma. On the ethico-pyschological plane, the epic aims at impressing upon the reader, the paramount of moral values. On the transcendental plane, which takes us beyond *dharma* and *adharma*, the war is fought not only in the *kuruksetra* but also in our own minds; this perpetual battle between the higher self and the lower self of man for establishing mastery over the body is symbolized by the fight between the cousins for sovereignty. Here we are face to face with the deep mysteries of life. The self under the guidance of the super self emerges successful in this conflict, after he has destroyed with the sword of knowledge ignorance embodied in his illegitimate desires and passions symbolized by his relatives, teachers, elders and friends ranged on the other side. Individual self, *jivatman* is Arjuna; absolute self is Krishna. Dhrtarastra is a symbol of the vacillating ego-centric self, while his sons 'symbolize in their aggregate the brood of ego-centric desires and passions. Vidura strands for '*buddhi*,' the one pointed reason, and Bhisma is tradition, the time bound element in human life and society. Though symbolism is not applied to all characters, the metaphysical interpretation leads us to the deeper meaning of the epic. The epic poets, 'are using every means in their power to expound, illustrate, and popularize, what the philosophy of the self, a lofty philosophy of ethical autonomy, with emphasis on the application of these principles to the problems of daily life."

It will serve our purpose if we concentrate on philosophical component of the *Mahabharata*. We can trace two philosophical issues in this work; one is expounded in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, rather in a very unsatisfactory manner, because it is mainly a work in theistic tradition. Second one is morality and polity expounded by two prominent characters; Vidura and Bhisma. But these philosophical issues in this work suffer from a serious drawback – draw back from philosophical point of view. Nowhere in this work do we find discussion, or criticism which is the hallmark of philosophy. More than anything else, what we find is only a sermon.

4.3 ETHICAL INSIGHTS OF EPICS

From the point of view of ethics, it is desirable to regard some characters as personification of virtue. *Vidura* and *Bhisma* belong to this category. In contrast to these characters in the *Mahabharata*, we have other characters which are regarded as personification of evil. Why should any epic portray evil characters? This is one question. Are they in a broader perspective, really evil forces? This is another question. The second question is much deeper philosophically and cannot be answered easily. First one is slightly easier to handle. An epic must be vast. Hence it ought to include all facts of world and all aspects of life. So evil characters ought to find place in any epic worth the name.

Vidura's exposition of moral principles begins with a clear distinction between *shreyas* (desirable) and *preyas* (pleasing). He compares *shreyas* with medicine which is not palatable. It is immediately followed by a second analogy to demonstrate the status of pleasure which is invariably accompanied by evil. To make this concomitant relation explicit, *Vidura* compares pleasure with honey, pleasure seeker with one who collects honey and evil with abyss and says that the pleasure hunter is busy only in seeking honey unmindful of impending danger of falling into the abyss. In the *Mahabharata*, *Vidura* plays his role on three occasions. On second occasion, *Vidura* plays the role of a counselor. His counseling has moral base. He makes an explicit distinction between two states of mind; those of wise man and ignorant. While Plato speaks of four cardinal virtues, *Vidura* speaks of six cardinal vices. Greed is one among them. He makes out a case for wise man by listing the remaining vices - lust, anger, irrational attachment, arrogance and jealousy – which he does not possess. There is no need to describe the personality of one who is free from these vices. *Dharma* according to *Vidura* consists in everyman doing his own duty and this is the cardinal principle of welfare state. *Vidura* talks of death and the need to accept the same. Death and fear are nearly inseparable if man does not accept that death is inevitable. In this context *Vidura* accepts reality, i.e., human nature and maintains that man hardly follows wisdom.

4.4 POLITICAL THOUGHT IN EPICS

Bhisma's advice to *Dharmaraya*, specifies only the duties and responsibilities of ruler with no mention of the duties of citizen. Against this backdrop, it becomes obvious that in real sense, citizen is the king and ruler is his guardian. *Bhisma's* lecture not only explicitly mentions king's qualities and duties but also it is first ever treatise on public administration. King should be proactive, truthful and straightforward. According to *Bhisma*, theses are the most important qualities of king. He should be compassionate but not too soft. The essence of '*rajadharma'* is safe-guarding the interests of citizens. In fact, *Bhisma* lists thirty-six qualities in an ideal king which are necessary to follow *rajadharma* without which the citizens do not receive protection from the king. Foreign policy is another aspect of public administration. Foreign policy involves two forces, enemies and friends. The role of friends is not much highlighted. But he emphasizes that king should know how to deal with enemy. Prudence is always the guiding force. *Bhisma* makes it very clear that war is not the solution. Nor did he mean that enemy can be spared. Constant vigil, concealing one's own weakness and proper judgment only can ensure safety and security. All these descriptions apply under normal circumstances, whereas in distress even enemy should enjoy compassion because a humanitarian treatment may destroy enmity. Ultimately, humane outlook scores over other considerations.

4.5 EIGHTEEN *PURANAS*

Purana is a 'story of the old days' and is more than a 'myth.' It is a record of stories of antiquity. Having no parallel in western literatures, these are meant for the celebration of religion, the glorification of saints and kings, and the edification of readers, whose faith is to be strengthened. They are prolix, flowery, repetitive, derivative from earlier models, with a good deal of borrowing, and conflation and lacking even the slender thread of history. Although we cannot date *puranas* by its

character of repeating the stories of the old days, one can trace their composition from 300 CE to 1000 CE. They speak of ascendancy of this or that main god in the evolving pantheon, they tend to dedicate to that god, around whom the old stories are retold.

Puranas is devotional material from the bhakti tradition; the stories about the gods who are the objects of people's loyalty, and practices of various kinds appropriate to the worship of those gods. These consist of chronicles and legends and genealogy of kings. They are treatises of history, of cosmology, with various symbolical illustrations of philosophical principles and so forth. According to tradition there are 18 puranas. These are the scriptures dealing with the worship of a particular aspect of God. They prescribe detailed courses of discipline of the worshipper. Each agama consists of four sections. They are philosophy, mental discipline, rules for the construction of temples and images, religious practices. The agamas are divided into three according to the deity that is worshipped. The Vaisnava agamas (also called the *pancaratra* and *vaikhanasa agamas*) for Vishnu, he Saiva Agamas for *siva* and the *sakta agamas* (*tantras*) for Sakti. Each glorifies its particular deity. People's reponse to their gods is in terms of religious practices of bhakti, prayers, ceremonial hymns, gifts given to Brahmins and gods, vows to service, *sraddhas* or ritual practices and *tirtahas*.

The doctrine of avatar (divine incarnation) is fully developed in the epics and the puranas. The purpose of an *avatar* is; 1. for protection of the virtuous, 2. for destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of *dharma* (moral order). According to the puranas there 10 avatars of visnu. *Matsya* –fish, *Kurma* –tortoise, *Varaha* – boar, *Narasimha* – the man-lion, *Vamana* – dwarf, *Parasurama* –Rama with the axe, *Ramacandra* – hero of the Ramayana, *Krisna* – the god of *Bhagavad gita*, *Balarama* – Warrior Rama, *Kalki* - the hero on a white horse who is to come at the end of the *kali-yuga*.

The gods are stratified, for there appear both vedic and post vedic deities together. Of the vedic gods, *indra*, *agni*, *soma*, *vayu* and *surya* reappear in puranic lore, but they are no longer central, as they were to vedic ritual and some of their functions have changed. It is as if they have been demoted in favour of the famous Hindu 'triad' of Brahma, the creator, Visnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer, who dominate puranic literature. Each of the three has a goddess as consort; Brahma's wife is Sarasvati, patroness of music and learning; Visnu's wife is Laksmi, goddess of fortune, sometimes beneficent and sometimes not; and Siva's wife is Parvati, daughter of the Himalaya mountain. Notable exception is found in Devimahatmya, section of the *Markandeya purana*, in which the ferocious Durga and the black Kali created spouseless out of the combined energy of the gods, become manifest to do combat with demons. Though other minor deities appear, the three major gods play an important role. The divine population includes a host of supernatural beings, like *pitrs*, dead ancestors, *gandharvas*, *apsarases*, *devas*, *asuras*, *raksasas*.

They are the instruments of popular education. Dharma or social duty reflects the same Hindu law codes basically Brahminical, and is given in illustrative stories, and in lecture form. The *puranas*, "…afford us far greater insight into all aspects of phases of Hinduism – its mythology, its idol-worship, its theism and pantheism, its love of God, its philosophy and its superstitions, its festivals and ceremonies, and its

ethics, than any other works."(M. A. Mehenlele, "The Purans," in *History and Culture,* vol.3. *the Classical Age,* 1954, p.296.)

'*Purana'* word has two slightly differing etymological meanings; *pura (*past*), ateetam* (Lost), *anaagatam* (about to happen) – is one meaning. *pura* (past), *bhavam* (happened) is another. In terms of structure *purana* consists of five components. They are; Description of nation or nations and their history, History of creation, History of re-creation, Description of dynasties, Story of each *Manu* (*Manvantara*) First and fourth components do incorporate elements of history. However, there is a vital difference between history and mythology. History follows a certain method and therefore, at some point to time or the other, it is possible to dispute what a historian claims, because history tries to gather as many evidences (not facts) as possible. *Puranas,* however, are altogether different. The relevance of evidences is totally alien to puranas. It is, therefore, impossible to refute what *puranas* claim. Nor can we defend the same. In addition to five components mentioned earlier, many *puranas* deal with cosmology. Perhaps this is the only topic common to philosophy and *puranas.* Interestingly, one *purana*, viz., *vayu-purana* attempts at geography, music, etc. Apart from the neglect of evidence, *puranas* suffer from one more defect. All *puranas* combine legends related to gods and demons, life after death, etc. which disqualify mythology from becoming worthy of serious philosophical study. In defence of *puranas*, it can be said that though *puranas* are related to mainly theological issues, they include almost all activities of life and hence they ought to occupy an important position in the list of disciplines. But this all inclusiveness itself is a serious defect.

4.6 BHAGAVAT GITA

In Sanskrit tradition there are many *gita* literature. One that got popularity as it is attributed to Krishna and formed part of the famous Mahabharata, is *Bhagavat Gita.* The term*'bhagavad'* means Lord, *gita* means song, and so the meaning of *Bhagavat gita* is literally, 'Song of the Lord.' This is the literature written in poetic form that must have been complied around 200 BCE. In the battle of *kurusetra* Lord Krishna urges Arjuna to do his duty, good or evil without any attachment for the fruit of actions (*niskama karma*). Gita is short beautifully harmonizes the philosophy of action, devotion and knowledge. Three gunas *satva* (principle of light), *rajas* (source of activity), *tamas* (responsible to resist the actions) are explained well. There are two possible approaches to the *Gita*. One is regarding it as a sacred text in conformity with tradition; second, regarding it as a philosophical text. The first alternative is irrelevant to us. The second one is disappointing, because we cannot find much philosophy in it. Whatever little philosophy that can be traced in the Gita is of minor importance only. Generally, we expect consistency in any philosophical argument. But this is totally alien to the Gita. If so, what is the position of the Gita within the framework of philosophy and what are its virtues, if it has any?

Three features are prominent in the Gita; knowledge, social obligation and devotion. The confluence of these principal features constitute what is popularly known as *YOGA.* There is no need to consider its role in life which the Gita has explained.What is important is its position in philosophy. But there is no reference to its philosophical foundation anywhere in the Gita. For example, consider 'devotion' (*bhakti*). Devotion is sensible only when '*Bhakta'* is distinct from *Paramatma*; not otherwise.

In other words the refutation of the *Advaita* is a prerequisite to accept the relevance of *bhakti.* But nowhere do we find any reference to *Dvaita* or *Advaita* in the work. On the contrary, the Gita concludes by merging obligation or *karma* and knowledge in *Bhakti.* It shows that religion receives precedence over philosophy. This becomes a stumbling block in studying the Gita from a philosophical perspective.

4.7 IDEA OF GOD IN GITA

In Gita, God is more personal. He is identified with *Krishnavatara*. He is named as *purusothama*. *Purusothama* means one who is a supreme being and intelligent with the mystical mind. He becomes a ground for mutable an immutable aspects of the universe that is he is *purusothama* in whom the whole world is grounded. Everything works by his divine intelligence and he is the creator of everything he is the ultimate cause principle of everything and has power of everything. And so, he is both transcendent and immanent. Wherever *dharma* is on decline the supreme being *purusothama* embodies himself to protect the upright and to punish the wicked and to establish *dharma*. Though he is unborn and imperishable lord of beings, yet comes into the world in his own images to maintain *dharma* in the universe. (*Gita* 4:6). Verse 14:27 says, "I am he upholder of immortal and imperishable. Brahman of absolute bliss" *Purusothama* is an embodiment of karma (actions). He is ceaselessly busy in maintaining the cosmic model. *Avidhya* should be overcome by the right knowledge. So we should unite our will and intelligence with God without expecting any fruits of our actions. Thus, he becomes the object of faith and devotion, source of mercy and love. (*Gita* 9:31).

The concept of *avatar* is prevalent even from the time of Vedas. Upanishads speak of *amsavatara* (partial manifestation of God or *avatar* is full conscious descent of god, yet into phenomenal world accepting the conditions of becoming. Wherever dharma is on decline the Supreme Being *Purusothama* embodies himself to protect the upright and to punish the wicked and to establish *dharma*. 7:24. Though he is unborn and imperishable lord of beings. Yet comes into the world in his own images to maintain Dharma in the universe 4:6. Thus, we find in Gita, God is of love and grace who evokes faith, love and devotion.

4.8 THREE MARGAS IN GITA

Karma, *jnana*, *bhakti* are three paths proposed as spiritual disciplines by Gita for the betterment of one's wealth. Karma Yoga: according to Gita every individual is expected o be *karma-yogin* ethically and intellectually virtuous. A karma yogi is the one in whom there is an absence of pride, conceit, vanity, egoism and presence of forgiveness, sincerity, purity, steadfastness, self control, renunciation, strong devotion to the Lord, reverence to the master and love for the scriptures. So if one does his duty, by his very duty, he becomes *karma-yogin* (*niskama karma*). Jnana Yoga: one should be *jnana yogi* also. *Jnana* of Brahman or *purusothama* refers to his wisdom and so for the *jnana-yogin* this *jnana* is an essential quality for his liberation. Bhakti Yoga: It insists on devotion. In this devotion a devotee should be a sincere and continuous seeker of truth. And so, he should try to get the *jnana* about the supreme being by loving the sacred scriptures. One of the means to do so is *saranagathi* which means total self-surrender of oneself to God.

One point becomes clear from the Gita; no one can attain *moksha* if he or she renounces this world. Renouncing the world is tantamount to renouncing obligations. Hence in defence of the Gita one assertion can be unhesitatingly made, that the Gita does not prioritize spirituality at the expense of worldly life. However, neither the charge that it does so, nor the countercharge that it does not, is philosophically insignificant. But this point is mentioned because attainment of *moksha* in relation to *karma* has primary importance in the Gita.

While *Jnana* stands for realization at highest level, *Karma* assumes a very different meaning. During the *Vedic* age, *Karma* meant only performing *Yajna*. But in the Gita it has come to mean social obligation. *Yoga* came to be understood as dedication. Hence, *Karma Yoga* may be understood as discharging duty with a sense of commitment.

The most important element in the Gita is the doctrine of *nishkama karma* which consists in discharging obligations in an impersonal manner. This attitude literally debars *yagas* because one performs it with selfish motive. The Gita however, never advocated that *karma* should be renounced. What it clearly asserts is that '*Karma Phala'* should be renounced. It only sidelines personal interest and upholds societal interest. Thus individual becomes the means and society the end. An impersonal approach to duty does not affect the performer in any manner, i.e., neither success nor failure affects him or her. This attitude is '*Samatva manobhava*– equanimity of mind.

It is necessary to clarify the relation between the meaning of karma and *varna*. At this stage, *chaturvarnya* (four-fold classification) becomes relevant. Translated to ordinary language, it means commitment to profession. '*chaturvarnyam mayasrishtva gunakarma vibhagshcha*'. It means *guna* (quality) and *karma* (profession) determine *Varna*. To this statement we can add another, quality determines profession. Commitment to profession is what *Dharma* is.

The Gita makes a clear distinction between commitment and interest. Commitment is impersonal, whereas interest is personal. Vested interest is well-known. But there is noting like vested commitment. When vested interest affects an individual, he may resort to prohibited means. But impersonal commitment does not result in this sort of selection. The maxim, 'ends do not justify the means' is implicit in the Gita.

One more aspect remains to be mentioned. There is a mistaken notion that there is hierarchy in profession. It is not the case as far as the Gita is concerned. But there is a distinction between 'good' and 'bad' or 'constructive' and 'destructive'. It is good to discharge duty which is in conformity with one's own nature. Otherwise, it is bad. Clearly, there is division of labour, and it is in the interest of society that such division is made mandatory. Therefore qualitative distinction in profession is strongly disapproved.

4.9 PATH OF *BHAKTI* AS MEANS TO LIBERATION

The term bhakti is defined as "devotion," or passionate love for the Divine. *Moksha*, or liberation from rebirth was not in the following of rules, regulations or societal ordering but it was through simple devotion to the Divine. Within the movement at large, useful distinctions have been made by contemporary scholars between those

poet-saints who composed verses extolling God *with* attributes or form, namely, "*saguna*" bhaktas, and, those extolling God without and beyond all attributes or form, "*nirguna*." While the differences between these two branches are indeed important, their overarching similarities cannot be minimized; both focused on singular devotion, mystical love for God, and had a particular focus on a personal relationship with the Divine.

A clearer expression of Bhakti began to be formed during the Epic and the Puranic periods. Texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana clearly explore Bhakti Yoga or the Path of Devotion as a means to salvation. In the Bhavat Gita, Lord Krishna preached the message of devotion to a personal God. Bhakti (love of God) not only leads the religious man to liberation, for this is a grace God is willing to bestow on all who seek to know him and love him, but is the goal itself, uniting man to God in eternal and dependent state of being. The God of Bhakti is gracious to men and has compassion for all. He is specially benevolent to those who love Him. His devotees are dear to Him. It is thus man's loving response to this divine graciousness on which he acknowledges himself utterly dependent for his salvation.

Bhakti is a very important topic found in the scriptures and with various shades of meanings in different contexts. The word bhakti is used in the scriptures in two different meanings. Bhakti means devotion towards God. Devotion is love directed towards a higher principle. Reverential love can be defined as devotion. We talk about *matr bhakti* and *pitr bhakti*. In our tradition, we look upon the parents as of worship. Similarly, we talk about *guru bhakti*, *desa bhakti* and *isvara bhakti*. Therefore, in general, bhakti is love towards a higher principle, especially love towards God. Three forms of love are 'means- love, end-love and self-love. Scriptures point out that all forms of love that a human being entertains are directed towards only three things. The first one is love of goal, wanting to achieve some end. Secondly, it is because we love them that we want to acquire them. Since the means are useful to accomplish the ends, we love the means also. The third object of love is oneself. Everyone loves himself or herself. The scriptures point out that there is a gradation in the intensity of these three forms of love. Love of the means is the least in its intensity. Love of the end is medium and love of oneself is the highest form of love, wherein the love has got the highest intensity. Most of the time love for people is purely the love for the means to accomplish the end. And often money is the end. Therefore the love for the end is superior to the love for the means. I love various ends hoping that they will give me comfort, security, happiness. It is for my benefit, my comfort, my security, my happiness, I love various ends.

Three grades of devotion

Scriptures point out that the intensity of love depends upon how you look upon God, because different people see God in different ways. The way you look upon God will determine the intensity of love. Majority of people look upon God only as the means for various worldly ends. As long as you look upon God as a means, that love is called *mandabhakti* (inferior devotion). The next set of people is still rare. They don't look upon God as means for various ends. They are mature enough. Their understanding of God is clearer. They are able to choose God as the end of life. The end of life means the goal of life. They know god represents security. God represents peace. God represents happiness. They know that everyone is seeking security, peace and happiness alone. Naturally their love of God is as the end and therefore it is more

intense than the previous one. Therefore, this bhakti is *madhyama* bhakti. *Uttama* bhakti is third and rarest form of love which is the most intense form of love. It is a love in which I look upon God neither as the means nor even as the end. The lord and the self being identical, God-love is equal to self-love. Since self-love is the most intense love, that form of love is called *uttama bhakti*. For *manda bhakti* god is dear. For *madhyama* bhakti god is dearer and for the *uttama bhakta* god is the dearest. Krisna beautifully elaborates this in the seventh and the twelfth chapters of the Gita. There are nine forms of bhakti. First three are, *manda*, *madhyama* and *uttama bhakti*, where in bhakti is the love of God. The next three are: *kara rupa*, *upasana rupa* and *jnana rupa* bhakti, wherein bhakti means spiritual discipline. The last there are *eka, aneka and arupa bhakti*, depending upon our understanding of God.

4.10 LET US SUM UP

Generally, Philosophy is meant by 'searching for' 'finding out,' inquiry into' what is truth or reality. Search for meaning has been a human activity from time immemorial, when first human beings started questioning. The possible explanations and the conclusions of their quest for truth, become philosophical thoughts. From the primitive to contemporary human being, this quest for truth is continuous. Time and again, Human society checks with its conclusions and definitions of reality, in the time of contemporary issues and questions. When encountered with irrelevant answers from the previous conceptions, they try for new answers for the new questions or even for the same old questions. In our present endeavour, we understand that the thoughts of the people of that time are ancient. As the quest for truth is an on going process, we consider the thoughts of people at the ancient times are not totally 'antiquated.' If they deserve only to be beautiful antiques, they would lose the significance and relevance to us today. The philosophical quest and the conclusions of the ancient times are ever fresh in our contemporary period too. They are ancient but never antiquated, out dated. 'Ancient' also brings to our mind, the concept of history. We fix the period in the past and look into what went on in that period in the minds of our ancestors. In India, we do not have strict linear understanding of history. Indian history is most shaped by circular notion of history. It is more of *kairological* than chronological. Therefore, we take care of thoughts being recorded in oral or written form. Often, something is considered to be philosophical, only when they are presented in a written form. In India, more than the written forms, ideologies are recorded in various other means of communication, such as oral transmission, art, architectures, dance, songs cultural customs and traditions.

The *puranas*, *itihasas* and *gita* emphasize on the necessity of ethics and advocates deep contemplation on moral virtues and self-control. It deals with cosmic & moral order maintaining peace, harmony and order in society and cosmos. In them, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics are intricately interrelated that it is very difficult to understand any of them in isolation. It is cosmic and spiritualistic, synthetic and integral. A clearer expression of Bhakti began to be formed during the Epic and the Puranic periods. Texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana clearly explore Bhakti Yoga or the Path of Devotion as a means to salvation.

4.11 KEY WORDS

Puranas **:** Ancient legends or histories of heroes and gods.

Bhakti **:** Devotion or love towards Personal God.

Nishkama karma : Doing action without any attachment to the fruits of them.

4.12 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Pandit, M.P. *Germs from the Gita*. Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1977.

Painadath, S. Sebastin. "Bhagavad Gita's Contribution to the Future of India." in *Jnanadeepa*. Vol.1/1 (January 1988). 20-26.

Mehenlele, M. A. "The Purans," in *History and Culture.* Vol.3. *The Classical Age.* 1954. 296ff

Block 2

HETERODOX SYSTEMS

UNIT 1
Carvaka

UNIT 2
Buddhism - 1

UNIT 3
Buddhism -2

UNIT 4
Jainism

Prof. George Panthanmackel,

Senior Consultant, IGNOU

Dr. M. R. Nandan

Govt. College for Women

Mandya - Mysore

Dr. Kuruvila Pandikattu

Jnana-deepa Vidyapeeth

Ramwadi,

Pune

Dr Babu Joseph

CBCI Centre

New Delhi

Prof. Tasadduq Husain

Aligarh Muslim University

Aligarh

Dr. Bhuvaneswari

Lavanya Flats

Gangai Amman Koil St.

Thiruvanmiyur

Chennai – 600 041

Dr. Alok Nag

Vishwa Jyoti Gurukul

Varanasi

Dr. Jose Kuruvachira

Salesian College & IGNOU Study Centre

Dimapur, Nagaland

Dr. Sathya Sundar Sethy

Dept of Humanities

IIT, Chennai.

Dr. Joseph Martis

St. Joseph’s College Jeppu, Mangalore – 2

Dr. Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon

147, Kabir park

Opp. GND University

Amristar – 143 002

Prof. Y.S. Gowramma

Principal,

College of Fine Arts,

Manasagangotri

Mysore – 570 001

Block Preparation

Unit 1	Dr. James Ponniah Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune.
Units 2 & 3	Kurian Alumkal Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.
Unit 4	Dr. T.K. Badrinath Vivekananda College, Chennai.

Content Editor

Dr. V. John Peter
IGNOU, New Delhi

Format Editor

Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

Programme Coordinator

Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

This block introduces the students to the teachings, philosophy and arguments of Carvaka, Buddhism and Jainism who are known for their unique contribution in terms of materialism, realism, nihilism and non-absolutism. These schools are called heterodox as they are diametrically opposed to those of orthodox schools of philosophy in India. Together they form a group of systems that opposed to the excess of ritualism, spiritualism, world-negating idealism, oppressive clericalism and inhuman casteism. Carvaka philosophy or Indian materialism is one of the oldest doctrines in India. Buddha was a very sensitive man who looked into solutions that were available at his time for human predicaments. Middle way proposed by him is rejection of extremes, be it rejection of extreme austerity or extreme indulgence in worldly pleasures (in his practical life) or rejection of 'eternalism' of Upanishads (there is one unchanging, permanent principle).

Unit 1 on Carvaka deals with the Indian materialist school called as *carvakas* or *lokayata.* The unit begins with the name given to this system as *carvaka,* analyzes the sources available on this school and exposes the fundamental doctrines and philosophical positions of the Carvaka system.

Unit 2 introduces the historical background of Buddha and the emergence of Buddhism as a philosophical and religious system in India. The basic teachings of Buddhism such as four noble truths, the theory of no soul, theory of dependent origination are elaborately dealt in this unit.

Buddhism has given birth to various schools and sects; division into sects is on the basis of differences in discipline and division into schools is on the basis of metaphysical & epistemological distinctions. **Unit 3** enumerates the basic philosophical positions of few prominent schools of Buddhism such as Vaibhasika, Sautrantika, Madhyamika and Yogacara.

Unit 4 gives a small historical background of the school of Jainism with its development and different sects, namely *Svetambaras* and the *Digambaras*. A detailed analysis into the various concepts like *Syadvada, Anekantavada, Saptabhanginaya*, and Jaina ethics found place in this unit.

UNIT 1 CARVAKA

Contents

1.0 OBJECTIVES

One of the important counter-movements in India that challenged the authority of Vedas and questioned its teachings is Caravaka philosophy. It sought to unsettle most of the traditionally held views and beliefs such the existence of God, soul and life after death. That is why it was called heterodox school of philosophy. The aim of this unit is to introduce the students to the teachings, philosophy and arguments of this school which were diametrically opposed to those of orthodox schools of philosophy in India.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Carvaka is a non-vedic Indian materialistic school of philosophy named after a sage called Carvaka, the founder of this system, according to a popular view. But some think that Carvaka was a prominent disciple of Brhaspati, the actual founder of the school. Carvaka etymologically means 'sweet-tongued' (*caru*+*vak*). Carvakas have sweet words. They are votaries of pleasing ideas if only you choose to follow their ways. Some hold that 'carvaka' has its etymology in '*carva*' which means to chew or eat. It is an allusion to their doctrine of 'eat, drink and make merry.' According to Gunaratana of eight century C.E., '*carva*' stands for chewing, grinding with the teeth, eating and swallowing virtues and vices. Carvakas are those who take no notice of virtues and vices. Carvaka was also called 'Lokayatya' which is the combination of the two words '*loka*' (The world) and 'ayata' (basis). It accepts only the reality of the material world. In other words, Carvakas are the people who care only about the earth and not about the heaven.

1.2 ORIGIN OF THE SCHOOL

According to the scholars, the origin of the school can be traced back to post-*upanishadic* period. The school would have been born between 600-400 B.C.E. The Buddhist texts of this period mentions several heterodox teachers such as Sanjaya, the skeptic, Ajita, the materialist, Purana Kasyapa the indifferentist and Kosala, the fatalist and Katyayana whose ideas in someway or the other come closer to the views of Carvakas. It is probably in this ambience of skepticism, materialism and nihilism that Carvaka philosophy would have originated. It must be noted that it is around the same time that the Atomists and the Sophists became popular in Greece. Though it is a remote possibility that the Atomists, the Sophists and the Carvakas would have influenced one another, it is evident that all these shared certain common views.

But Chattopadhyaya who has written extensively on Lokayata and Carvaka schools holds that already in pre-Buddhist text of Chandogya Upanishad (vii 7-9) of seventh century BCE there is a reference to a view identifying body with the self, the philosophical position of Lokayata/Carvakas. But it must be noted that the text does not mention the word 'Lokayatas' or 'Carvakas' and attributes the view to the Asuras. According to T.M.P. Mahadevan, even in the earliest text of Rg-veda, there are references to heretics, non-conformists, skeptics, agnostics and critics of Vedas.

But Kautilya in the fourth century B.C. speaks of the Lokyatas though only once, but in the context in which he speaks of them seems to indicate that they had an established system already that time like that of the Samkhya and Yoga. In the second century B.C. Patanjali speaks of the Lokyatas and of the Bhaguri as their supporter. The texts of second century C.E., namely, the *Kamasutra* of Vatsayana and the *Nyayasutra* of Gautama—one of earliest texts of Nyaya system contain the views of Lokyata Sutras and have an extensive discussion mainly on two topics, very commonly attributed to Lokayatas'/'Carvakas': i) the denial of inference as a source of knowledge and ii) the denial of self distinct from the body. Besides this, the Buddhist sources such as *Payasi Suttanta* and *Samanna-Phala-Sutta* written around 4th-5th Cent CE speak about the views of materialism and the later text speaks of 'heretics' of Buddha's time including Ajita Kesakambali who is a representative of extreme materialism and regarded as a follower of Carvaka school. Hiriyanna considers Carvaka philosophy as a form of accidentalism namely *yadrccha-vada or animitta-vada* because, for all of them, world is basically a chaos and whatever order is seen in this world is the outcome of mere chance.

1.3 THE LITERARY SOURCES OF CARVAKAS/LOKAYATAS

The original writings of Carvakas, if any, are no longer extant. Most of what we know about Carvakas and their philosophy is through the *Purvapaksha* (refutations) as provided by the opponents. The chief among them are Madvacharya's *Sarva-darsana-samgraha*, Samkara's *Sarva Siddanta-samgraha* and Krishn Misra's *Prabodha-chandrodaya* (an eleventh century C.E. allegorical drama intended to popularize the Advaita view by ridiculing specifically the Carvaka view), Only exception to this is Jayasiri Bhatta's *Tattvo-paplava-simgha*, (which literally means 'the lion that throws overboard all categories), a treatise in defense of Carvaka philosophy. The work edited by Sanghvi and Parikh claim that the actual text of the only original work of Carvakas roughly belong to the eight century CE. Since the text

holds that no *pramana* whatsoever is possible, many scholars think that it represents extreme skepticism, and it defends neither materialism nor perception as the only source of valid knowledge.

Apart from these, one more text needs to be mentioned in connection with Carvakas and it is called Lokayata-sutra or Carvaka-sutra which was only referred to by many writers but never available as a text. It is generally attributed to Brihas*Pati*, who is traditionally regarded as the founder of this school. Yet the existence of another work known as Brhaspati-*sutra* (a work on political economy) attributed to the same author brings in more ambiguity. But Misra's *Prabodha-chandrodaya* says that the Lokayata Sutras were initially formulated by Brihas*Pati* and later handed over to Carvaka who popularised them through his pupils.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. What is the meaning of the term 'Carvaka'? What is the other name for this school?

…...
....
....
....
....
....

2. Who is believed to be the founder of the school? What is his major work (attributed to him) that forms of the basis of Carvaka philosophy?

…...
....
....
....
....

3. What are some of the non-carvaka literary sources that speak about the philosophy of Carvakas?

…...
....
....
....
....

1.4 EPISTEMOLOGY

According to Carvakas, perception (*Pratyaksa*) is the only source of valid knowledge and they hold that nothing exists except what is perceived by five senses. Accordingly, they refuted inference (*anumana*) and testimony (*sabdha*), which are accepted by almost all other schools of Indian philosophy as valid and reliable. For them, perception is of two kinds, namely, external and internal, the former kind

involving the operation of the five senses while the latter involves the operation of the mind. Knowledge is the outcome of contact between an external object and one of the five senses, although further knowledge may be acquired through the process of the mind operating with the sense knowledge. Ultimately, then, all knowledge is derived from the senses.

For them inference is not a valid means of knowledge because universal relation which should serve as its ground is impossible. For instance let us take the following example:

“whatever has smoke has fire

The hill has smoke

therefore the hill has fire.”

Here a universal and necessary relation is assumed between the smoke and the fire. Carvakas questions this. They would ask 'How did you get this knowledge? From the kitchen where you have seen fire and smoke? But it cannot give you necessary relation between fire and smoke? Have you observed all kitchens to affirm their (smoke and fire) co-presence. What about the past and the future instances. So no one can be certain about any relation. In inference we proceed from the known to the unknown and there is no certainty in this, though some inferences may turn out to be accidentally true.” Just because certain things are sometimes true in some instances, they need not be true at all times in all instances. Consider a causal relation between A and B in which A causes B. What you observe is A is followed by B. This induces a belief in you that this will be the case in the future too. Therefore causation is a belief, nothing more. From the observed case, we cannot infer anything about the observed. Inference is impossible and it is utmost “a merer leap into the dark.” Thus inference is not a valid means of knowledge.

Carvakas brought several other objections against the possibility of a valid inference. They are 1. Impressions created by inferential knowledge are not as vivid (*aspastavat*) as those made by perception. 2. Inference always depends on other things for the determination of its objects. 3. Inference has to depend on perceptual statements. 4. Inferential knowledge is not directly produced by the objects. 5. Inference is not concrete (*avastu-vishayatvat*) 6. Inference is often contradicted (*badhyamanatvat*) and 7. there is no proof which may establish that every case of the presence of the reason (*hetu*) should also be a case of the presence of probandum (*sadhya*) i.e. there is no proof establishing the invariable and unconditional concomitance between the middle and the major terms.

Carvaka's views on inference has been criticised by many thinkers and philosophical schools. According to them, first of all, inference is inescapable for Carvaka himself. To refuse the validity of inference is to refuse to think and discuss. All thoughts, all discussions, all doctrines, all affirmations and denials, all proofs and disproofs are made possible by inference. It is through inference, not through sense-perception that the Carvaka knows what the other doctrines are, and it is through inference that the

Carvaka hopes to convince others of the soundness of his argument. Secondly, the rejection of inference itself is self-contradictory. That all inferences are invalid is itself an inference, which the Carvaka must admit. Some historians of philosophy think that Carvakas did not reject inference altogether. They did not favour the use of inference only for metaphysical categories, i.e as regards things that have never been perceived.

\They also do not accept testimony (*sabda*). Madvacharya in his *Sarva-darsana-samgraha* quotes their position as follows: “Nor can testimony be the means thereof, since we may either allege in reply....that this is included in the topic of inference; or else we may hold that this fresh proof of testimony is unable to leap over the old barrier that stopped the progress of inference, since it depends itself on the recognition of a sign in the form of the language used in the child's presence by the old man; and, moreover, there is no more reason for our believing another's word that smoke and fire are invariably connected than for our receiving the ipse dixit of Manu (which, of course, we Carvakas reject).”

Thus it is clear that testimony does not have any value for the Carvakas and accordingly Vedas are not authoritative and they are meaningless and misleading. Those who composed them aimed to confound and confuse the common people in order to achieve their own selfish purpose.

1.5 METAPHYSICS OF CARVAKAS

Carvaka Metaphysics, which is directly and logically derived from their epistemology, is “an unqualified materialistic monism.” They hold a philosophy of the matter whcih means 'Matter is all.' Since perception is the only reliable source of knowledge, whatever is known through it alone is real and matter becomes the only reality. Sense-perception does not reveal any metaphysical entity. What it can perceive is only matter in its fourfold form; earth, water, fire and air. Carvakas do not accept ether (*akash*), because it is not an object of perception. The four elements are real not as subtle forms but in their gross particle forms. There is no reality other than these four elements and their combinations.

If so, what is consciousness? How do you account for it? How do you explain the capacity of human beings for reasoning, reflecting and imagining? Carvakas do not deny consciousness but deny only that it can be independent of the body. They regard consciousness as a mere product of matter. It does not 'inhere in particles of matter' but when the latter come to be organized in a specific form, they are found to show signs of life. It is always found associated with the body and is destroyed with the body's disintegration. When the four elements of matter come together in a particular mode to form the living organisms, the animal and human consciousness appear in it. It is the result of an “emergent and dialectical evolution, an epiphenomenon, a by-product of matter.” Consciousness is an after-glow of matter. They would say “Matter secretes mind as liver secretes bile”. If none of the elements of physical body possesses consciousness, is it not that consciousness is independent of physical body? Their answer would be no. When physical elements come together to form an organic pattern, consciousness emerges. It does not inhere in any particular part of the body. It is just like certain tastes and intoxicating qualities are got out of certain

combinations of ingredients, though none, taken separately, possesses it. Red is got out the betel leaf and lime, but none of it apparently seems to posses red.

The soul therefore is nothing other than the conscious living body. They say that there is no soul or no consciousness apart from body which is evidenced by the fact that consciousness perishes with the body. Therefore body is the self and the body is the product of material elements. Sankara in his *Sarva Siddanta-samgraha* describes their understanding of the soul as follows: "The soul is but the body characterized by the attributes signified in the expressions, "I am stout," "I am youthful," "I am grown up," "I am old" etc. It is not something other than that body. The consciousness that is found in the modifications of non-intelligent elements (ie in organisms formed out of matter) is produced in the manner of the red colour out of the combination of betel, areca-nut and lime. There is no world other than this; there is no heaven and no hell; the realm of Siva and like regions are invented by stupid imposters of other schools of thought."

The Carvaka thus denies soul or Atman as a surviving or transmitting entity, but it does not mean, according to Hiriyanna, that the Carvaka denies a conscious or spiritual principle but refuses to regard it as ultimate and independent.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. What are the means of knowledge that Carvakas accept? What do they reject explicitly?

…..
....
....
....
....
....

2. Do Carvakas believe in the five elements of the material world? What do they deny? Why?

…..
....
....
....
....

3. Do Carvakas accept consciousness? How do they understand it?
…..
....
....
....
....

1.6 CARVAKAS VIEWS ON GOD AND RELIGION

Since Carvakas do not believe in any metaphysical reality beyond matter, it logically follows that they out rightly consider that traditional concepts of God, religion and life-after death are “pure fictions, sheer imaginations of fevered brains”. There is nothing existent beyond this material world. Hence there is no survival of anything, no other world, and no God as unmoved mover, the first cause and the creator of the universe. Since all that exists is only matter, God who is supposed to be a supernatural and transcendental being does not exist as it cannot be the object of perception, the only valid means of knowledge. Thus Carvakas summarily deny the existence of God and dethrone God who is supposed to indwell in the human beings as *antaryamin*. They also de-recognise conscience, the voice of God, which guides man. Subsequently, they rule out the possibility of religion as the realm of faith and belief systems that assume human beings' innate thirst for spirituality and structure their consciousness towards a destiny beyond this world has no basis in the true nature of reality (i.e.materialistic) according to their scheme of things.

1.7 ETHICS OF CARVAKAS

The Carvaka ethics is based on the assumption that the human beings get annihilated at the point of death. She or he begins life with birth and ends it with death. Carvakas do not believe in the theory of *karma* and accordingly they reject the notion of re-birth after death. Since this is the only life for the individual, their exhortation is: “make the best use of it.” To get the best out of this only life, one has to enjoy this life and to seek the utmost pleasure. The basic desire of every being/creature is to gain pleasure and avoid pain. Pleasure in this life is the sole end of man. Pleasure goes with pain. But on account of this, you should not run away from pleasure. The fact that there is pain in life should not deter the human beings from pursuing pleasure. Some of the sayings of Carvakas encourage us not to be bogged down by the presence of pain in the process of seeking pleasure: “The wise man does not reject the kernel because of the husk;” “None gives up eating fish because there are bones and scales;” “Roses are not discarded because they have thorns;” “we do not cease to grow crops because the animals destroy them; we do not stop cooking our food, because beggars ask for it;” In all of these sayings the Carvakas call upon the people to enjoy pleasure at all times. Thus pleasure is the natural ethical principle. One should take efforts to minimize pain and maximize pleasure. Whatever action minimizes pain and maximizes pleasure is a good action.” A Carvaka lives in the moment for the moment. They exhort the human beings not to ignore a present pleasure in the hope of gaining some greater pleasure later. They invoke the following proverbs in support of their position: “Make hay while the sun shines;” “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush;” “A pigeon today is worth more than a peacock of tomorrow.” They debunk all religious practices and rituals. One of the reasons for their rejection is that they falsely promise people a good future life but in reality the religious rituals are mechanisms of priests to exploit others and make a living out of it. Vatsayana in his *kamasutra* quotes some of the *Lokyata Sutras*. In this connection let us see one of their aphorisms:

1. Religious rites should not be practiced,

2. because their fruition depends upon the future,
3. And is doubtful.
4. Who, unless he is a fool, gives away to others what belongs to him?
5. A pigeon to-day is better than a peacock tomorrow.
6. A sure *kaudi* is better than a doubtful gold coin.

These Lokyata Sutras thus appeal to people not to ignore the present at the cost of the future. In a spirit of cynicism, one Carvaka asks a priest why he sacrifices a poor animal. The priest replies that the animal sacrificed goes direct to heaven. Then the Carvaka tells the priest "If so, you can jolly well put yourself in that inevitable position."

The Carvakas do not believe in heaven or hell and for them paradise could only be on this earth. Sankara's *Sarva-siddhanta-samgraha* speaks of what has been repeatedly called the Carvaka philosophy of hedonism:

The enjoyment of heaven lies in eating delicious food, keeping company of young women, using fine clothes, perfumes, garlands, sandal paste, etc.

The pain of hell lies in the troubles that arise from enemies, weapons, diseases; while liberation (moksha) is death which is the cessation of life-breath.

The wise therefore ought not to take pains on account of that (liberation); it is only the fool who wears himself out by penances, fasts, etc.

Chastity and other such ordinances are laid down by clever weaklings. Gifts of gold and land, the pleasure of invitations to dinner are devised by indigent people with stomachs lean with hunger.

The construction of temples, houses for water-supply, tanks, wells, resting places, and the like, is praised only by travelers, not by others.

The Agnihotra ritual, the three Vedas, the triple staff carried by the priests, the ash-smearing, are the ways of gaining a livelihood for those who are lacking in intellect and energy ….

The wise should enjoy the pleasures of this world through the proper visible means of agriculture, keeping cattle, trade, political administration, etc.

From the above passage it is clear that the Carvaka's emphasis is on the individual, rather than any collective, good; accordingly, the Carvakas accept only two of the four *purusarthas* or traditional human values, namely, attainment of worldly pleasure (*kama*) and the means of securing it (*artha* = wealth), thus rejecting religious merit (*dharma*) and liberation (*moksha*). The Carvakas do not make any qualitative distinction among pleasures, nor do they try to distinguish the pleasures of the body from the pleasures of the mind. Except in the case of activities like trade and agriculture they accept immediately available pleasures rather than any promised ones of the future as they would say "A pigeon today is better than a peacock tomorrow," and "a certain copper is better than a doubtful gold."

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. Why do you think that Carvakas do not accept God? Give reasons.

…...
....
....
....
....
....

2. Why should I 'make the best use of life' according to Carvakas? How?

…...
....
....
....
....

3. Why do Carvakas reject religious rituals?
…...
....
....
....
....

1.8 LET US SUM UP

Carvaka philosophy or Indian materialism, one of the oldest doctrines in India already quite noted in the earliest text of Rig Veda, an anti-hegemonic counter-movement, has continued to influence Indian academia even into our modern times as we see in the philosophy of modern and contemporary Indian thinkers like Devatman and M.N. Roy. Some view Carvaka philosophy less as a constructive philosophy than as a reaction to the excess of ritualism, spiritualism, world-negating idealism, oppressive clericalism and inhuman casteism. However this is not to state that the Carvaka system is philosophically insignificant and unsound as Dale Riepe observes that Carvaka's epistemological outlook is empirical, their metaphysics materialistic and ethics hedonistic.

Carvaka etymologically means 'sweet-tongued' (*caru+vak*). Carvaka was also called 'Lokayatya' which accepts only the material world as real. Brhaspati is the founder of the school. Some of the texts that refer to the philosophy of Carvakas are Madvacharya's *Sarva-darsana-samgraha*, Sankara's *Sarva Siddanta-samgraha*, Krishn Misra's *Prabodha-chandrodaya*, the *Kamasutra* of Vatsayana, the *Nyayasutra* of Gautama—one of the earliest texts of Nyaya system and the Buddhist sources such as *Payasi Suttanta* and *Samanna-Phala-Sutta.*

The only means of knowledge the Carvakas accept is perception. And they openly question and deny the validity of means of knowledge such as inference and testimony. Carvakas do not believe in all the five elements of the material world. They deny the existence of Ether because it cannot be perceived. Carvakas do not deny consciousness but only its existence independent of the body. It is always found associated with the body and is destroyed with the body's disintegration. For them, consciousness is as a mere product of matter arising out of the combination of the four elements of matter under certain favourable conditions. Carvakas do not believe in God because they deny the existence of anything which is not material. Hence God who is supposed to be a supernatural and transcendental being is not a reality as God cannot be the object of perception, the only valid means of knowledge. Since this is the only life for me, I must make the best use of it. To get the best out of this only life, I have to enjoy this life and to seek the utmost pleasure. Carvakas reject religious rituals because they falsely promise people a good future life but in reality they are mechanisms of priests to exploit others and make a living out of it.

1.9 KEY WORDS

***Carvaka*:** etymologically it means 'sweet-tongued' (*caru*+*vak*). Some hold that 'carvaka' has its etymology in '*carva*' which means to chew or eat. '*carva*' allegorically stands for chewing, grinding with the teeth, eating and swallowing virtues and vices.

***Lokayatya*:** It is the combination of the two words '*loka*' (The world) and *'ayata'* (basis). This word expressed the belief of the 'Carvakas that accepts only the reality of the material world.

Brihas*Pati*: He is traditionally regarded as the founder of Carvaka school. *Lokayata-sutra or Carvaka-sutra* which was only referred to by many writers but never available as a text is generally attributed to him.

1.10 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Chattopadhyaya, Debiprasad, *Lokayata: A Study in Ancient Indian Materialism,* New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1959.

Chattopadhyaya, Debiprasad (ed.,), *Carvaka-Lokayata: An Anthology of Source Materials and Some Recent Studies,* New Delhi, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 2006 (1990, 1994).

Das Gupta, (abridged by R. R. Agarwal & S. K. Jain) *History of Indian Philosophy*, Allahabad, Kitab Mahal, 1969.

Hiriyanna M., *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1994(93).

Mahadevan, TMP, *Invitation to Indian Philosophy*, New Delhi, Arnold-Heinemann, 1974.

Mishra, Umesha, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol 1, Allahabad, Tirabhukti Publications 1957.

Padhi B. & Padhi M. *Indian Philosophy and Religion: A Reader's Guide,* New Delhi, D.K. Printworld(p) Ltd., 1990.

Rao Nagaraja P, *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy,* New Delhi, Indian Book Company, Year of Publication (not found).

UNIT 2 BUDDHISM - 1

Contents

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit tries to make the students acquainted with the basic philosophical position of Buddhism in general. It enables them also to make comparative studies and answer the criticism raised by rival systems, as they expose the basic tenets of the system under survey. In this unit we will give the historical setting of Buddha, His teachings, its metaphysical pre-suppositions and its far-reaching implications.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the history of the world, 8th century B.C. to 1st century A.D is known as 'Axial Era', a period of great 'Spiritual Quest' where we get almost all lasting answers to life's perennial questions. India gave her contribution to the genuine thoughts of Axial Era in the form of Upanishadic enquiry, religions of Jainism and Buddhism and all other systems of thought. We generally divide them as orthodox and heterodox contributions. Buddha is one fine product of this era as a new pathfinder. From him comes a religio-philosophical system which is a whole in itself with its diverse developments and spread in course of time.

Every person will be influenced by his age, but what will influence him and how, depends on his sensitivities too. Buddha was a very sensitive man. The story of four sights that made him a wanderer (old man, disease, dead body and recluse) bears witness to this. We also see these sights, but they are like speck of dust fallen on hand. In the case of Buddha they were like speck of dust fallen on eye which is very sensitive and could not rest at ease until a solution was reached. They worked like immediate catalysts that caused an awareness of the basic realities of life. What do these four sights symbolise? The first three; old man, diseased man and dead body speak about the common plight of human beings. This brings Buddha to the first noble truth '*Sarvam Dukkam.*' Recluse or state of being a renouncer was the way of that age for dedicating oneself for full time enquiry. Thus he leaves his palace and throne and begins his search for the reasons and remedies for the plight of man.

Buddha due to his sensitivity looked into solutions that were available at his time. After taking the life of a wanderer he visited many learned and rigorous practising ascetics. But he was not satisfied fully with any of them. After six years of search he came to his own discipline which he calls middle way and dharma. Middle way for him is rejection of extremes, be it rejection of extreme austerity or extreme indulgence in worldly pleasures (in his practical life) or rejection of 'eternalism' of Upanishads (there is one unchanging, permanent principle) or nihilism of Carvaka (there is no permanent, unchanging principle, life ends with physical death). Thus for his teachings the philosophical foundation becomes a new position that he reached through his enlightenment. This middle way is the theory of dependent origination, that everything is conditional, momentary and without essence. When one forgets this and considers something as unconditional, eternal and with essence, then suffering begins. This was a radical finding which begins with basic position which is opposite to the one that was accepted at that time.

Let us be aware of the complications in understanding what Buddha actually taught. Historically he is so remote and he didnot write down anything. He taught orally for 45 years and his teaching fell on the ears of people from various cultures and traditions. So from his part he must have adapted himself to their culture (*paryaya*), and from the hearer's part they got only according to their capacity of reception (*adhikari bheda*). He taught in the language of the ordinary people and there were many, and the philosophical language was Sanskrit. In all these languages the disciples of Buddha later recorded his words. Buddha was a teacher who taught 'be light unto thyself' (*atta dipo bhava*). It means do not take anything true without your rational scrutiny. He also repudiated human authority as the final word in his society

of monks (*Sangha*) and taught, “let the dharma be your guide, no human authority”. All these caused lot of practical disciplinary problems as so many teachings came up as Buddha’s teachings. Thus the need for a canon came up and 30 years after Buddha’s *parinirvana* (death), the first council was conducted. Within a century in the next council strong disagreement between traditionalists (*Teravadins*) and progressivists (*Mahasangikas*) came up. Human emotional imbalance in the form of putting down and condemning the other as low and vile (*hina*) happened in the course of time. These all contributed to the growth of sects and sub-sects and many schools and many canons.

Today we have Pali Canon, Chinese Canon, Tibetan Canon and Sanskrit Canon with their own special emphasis. To the question ‘which among this is really Buddha’s teaching (*buddha vachana*), nobody dared to negate the other canon, rather emphasised their own among others: “all these are ‘*buddha vachanas*’, but ‘this is His, ‘the teaching,’ is the trend of Buddhist sects. So each one will present Buddha’s teaching from his angle. This doesn’t mean that they all disagree in everything. In some basic teachings they all agree. They are the practical teachings of Buddha (the four noble truths), No-soul theory, conditioned origination, and the law of impermanence. To these basics each sect adds its own special emphasis as *Buddha vachana*. We don’t go into special emphasis of sects in this unit. But we only expose those teachings that normally all agree as real Buddha teaching. In unit ‘Buddhism – II’ we will discuss some distinguishing marks of some schools.

This unit is divided into two parts. First is the most known teaching of Buddha, (four noble truths) which is very much practical though deep understanding of it exposes metaphysical pre-suppositions. In the second part we will expose metaphysical pre-suppositions. But water tight compartmentalisation is not possible, for they go together always. Thus student will see repetitions in both parts. This is unavoidable as they always go together. This separation is for clarity sake only.

2.2 FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

Everyone who accepts Buddha agrees on one thing that his basic teaching is four noble truths (*chatvari arya satyani*). They are ‘*sarvam dukkam’, ‘dukka samudaya’, ‘dukka nirodha’, ‘dukka nirodha marga’*. This is actually ethico-religious teaching. This is exposed in the first discourse the ‘*Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta’*. All agree that Buddha was against hair splitting metaphysical speculations that are useless from the perspective of life’s goal. He has a classical simile to explain it. He says if a man is struck by a poisonous arrow and is in immediate need of medication but says, ‘I will not allow you to remove this arrow and put medication until I know who shot, this arrow, what it is made of, how far away he was standing, what type of bow he used etc, then, by the time you collect all answers the man will die. Thus, these answers are useless at the moment. The fact is in front of us and the means for saving his life too. Let us do that.

Buddha was taken up by the plight of humans. He named it '*dukkham'* (suffering), searched the cause of it and presented remedies like a doctor who diagnoses disease and prescribes medicine for cure. The goal is religious as life without 'suffering,'is a stage beyond 'this present life situation'. And the means are purely ethical and meditational. Only difference in this matter between him and the other religious thinkers was rejection of metaphysical speculations, be it on God or soul or the beginning and end of life, etc. Buddha saw it as not only useless but also detrimental to remove suffering. According to Buddha, suffering is caused by ignorance and this ignorance is ignorance about real nature of reality which is *anatma*, *anitya* and *dukkha.* This ignorance causes attachment, craving and all its evil effects. The goal for us is removal of this ignorance by removing attachment and craving. That is termed as '*Nirvana'* and the means for this is *prajna*, *sila* and *samadhi* (awareness, moral precepts and meditation). They are elaborated into 'noble eightfold path'.

***Sarvam Dukkham*: (everything is suffering)**

Indian Philosophy in general begins at a realization of this human predicament; the unfortunate existential situation in which one finds oneself, that his life is 'brutish and short'. It begets frustration, unhappiness and pain. Some scriptures say "life is a vale of tears"; "vanity of vanities, everything is vanity". This is a pessimistic way of looking at life. Buddha also shares in it. According to him, "Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with what is unpleasant is suffering, if one wants something and does not get it, that also is suffering; in brief, the life as we see it is suffering (it is the aggregate of five *skandhas* with thirst for existence and clinging)". If we ask the question why it is suffering we must say it is suffering because it is impermanent. Though this initial pessimism is there in Buddha, it does not make him inactive; rather, it energises him to search for answers. One general answer was already there in the form of law of karma, i.e., the source of this unfortunate situation is of our own making. It is our own deeds that breed the *karmic* residue which is stored up and activated later and makes our life like this. And the future will be conditioned by the present deeds. This situation is called *karmic* circle, *samskara*. Buddha shared in this worldview and within this context arrived at his enlightenment; having been dissatisfied of the already given explanation and he proposes his own.

If we ask the question 'What was Buddha's enlightenment?' we must say it was the realization, '*sarvam dukkham*'. Ordinary man, at one time speaks of life as vale of tears, in the next moment, strives for pleasure and clings to some soul. Even when he fails to attain pleasure he is under the impulse, the thirst for pleasure and appeasing of soul. For the ordinary man things are not consistently impermanent. The distinction of Buddha is that for him even those strivings for pleasure are painful and the attainment of the so-called pleasures too. Clinging to a permanent soul is the root delusion. Thus everything is pain, and this realisation is the first criteria for enlightenment. Thus this is the first noble truth, and this realization is the first criteria for following Buddha way.

One who realizes consistently that everything is suffering, he will strive with the whole heart to end it. In order to end it, first he must know how it originates and how it can be removed. An expert doctor will not only consider the symptoms of disease but also will find out the root cause of it, in order to root it out. Buddha did the same. If every action leads to suffering, can we escape from suffering by desisting from action? Here comes Buddha's moral consciousness, that it is not action that is important, but the attitude behind it. Action before being done externally, happens internally or in the mind. As every action has its cause and brings out its fruits, every mental action too has its cause and effect. This cause-effect examination of all actions within the person through a psychological analysis is his second noble truth.

***Dukkha Samudaya* (cause of suffering)**

Second noble truth says, our suffering has a cause. That which is caused can come to an end if the causal condition is removed. Something that is uncaused cannot be removed. (this is the foundation for Buddha's rejection of Upanishadic uncaused and permanent soul). Thus the second noble truth is the message of hope that comes from Buddha. Since bondage is caused, there is possibility of removing it by controlling causes and eventually eliminating them.

What is it that causes suffering? In the first sermon at Benaras (*Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta*) Buddha said, it is the thirst (*trishna*) that leads to rebirth, which is accompanied by delight and passion. Later this thirst is further elaborated as aroused by sense-objects (*kamatrishna*) and it is directed towards one's worldly existence (*bhavatrishna*). When senses come in contact with their objects, sensations arise and these awaken desire. In this way the so-called thirst for objects of desire (*kamatrshna*) arises. The second type of *trishna* arises when one takes worldly personality (five *skandhas*) as the self (*atma*) and clings to it. This is the ignorance that entangles one in the cycle of existence. When all these joined together in cause effect chain (dependent origination - *pratitya samutpada*), the famous theory of 12 spokes of *bhavachakra* of Buddhism originated. They explain it both in forward order and reverse order.

Let us see the twelve-membered chain of causes and effects:

Ignorance (*avidya*)

Impression (*samskara*)

Initial Consciousness in the embryo (*vijnana*)

Mind-body embryonic organism (*nama rupa*)

The six fields viz., the five senses and the mind together with their objects (*sadayatana*)

Contact between the senses and the objects (*sparsa*)

Sense experience (*vedana*)

Strong Desire (*trishna*)

Clinging to existence (*upadana*)

Will to be born (*bhava*)

Re-birth (*jati*)

Pain, old age and death (*jara-marana*)

In the general presentation of cause of suffering in the twelve-membered chain of causes and effects, the root cause of entanglement in causal chain is ignorance which is the absence of liberating cognition, the four noble truths. In such a person craving for worldly objects and worldly personality come into being (*kama trishna* and *bhavatrishna*). The impressions that are like a subtle body is the bearer of rebirth; it enters into a new womb after death, driven by these impressions. This necessitates formation of body-mind organism and in turn the formation of senses and mind as six organs of cognition. Due to that, contact with objects occurs. And that causes sensations of various kinds leading to the passions (*raga*, *dvesa* and *moha*), foremost being the thirst that clings to sense-pleasure and to the supposed self that grasps them, thereby leading to renewed bondage and new existence. Once again, birth and entanglement in the suffering of existence come about, and so it goes, in the endless chain, till the liberating cognition and annihilation of thirst put an end to the cycle of existence. When one strikes at the root of this endless chain by removing the basic ignorance which is the wrong view of *atma*, permanence and pleasure, one prepares the way for third noble truth.

***Dukka Nirodha* (cessation of suffering)**

It is the third noble truth about cessation of suffering, *nirvana.* Negatively if we speak of *nirvana* it is cessation of all suffering; annihilation of all that binds; complete vanishing of thirst, abandoning of all afflictions (*upadhi*). Positively it is attainment of freedom. The question is freedom from what and freedom to what. *Nirvana* is a freedom from all the three types of acts that bind mental, vocal and physical. This can happen only when one's actions do not create craving (*raga*), aversion (*dvesa*) and delusion (*moha*). Again *Nirvana* is a freedom to a life with full of good will (*metta*), compassion (*karuna*), sympathetic appreciation (*mudita*) and equanimity (*upekkha*). Its outward expressions include politeness, good manners, cleanliness of habits and the like. Buddha himself stands as a beacon with his personality.

Buddha when he started teaching was a man of harmonious, self-contained personality with great magnetism. This comes from self-confidence resulting from his enlightenment, the attainment of the right view. This is liberation. He had a contemplative temperament and kind-heartedness towards all mankind, even towards one who came to kill him. The majesty of his appearance and his courtesy towards people even of lower status and his noble manners converted many even Angulimala and impressed even those who rejected his teaching.

What is the nature of *Nirvana*, if we take it as the permanent state after death? It is a controversial issue. For Buddhism teaches *anatma* and *anitya*. If no permanent agent to experience freedom, then who attains liberation? Or what will be that after right view dawned and aggregate of *skandhas* are no more which we normally call death? Rightly Buddha kept these questions in the inexpressible (*avyakrtas*), for they are beyond our categories of linguistic expression. Later schools explained it in their own way.

***Dukkha Nirodha Marga* (path for cessation of suffering)**

The fourth noble truth is about the path to liberation. This is the path that Buddha followed and attained enlightenment. So anyone who wishes to follow Buddha and attain enlightenment can follow this and attain enlightenment. In fact, it is path to moral perfection, through practice of morality or virtues. Morality in Buddhism has a deeper understanding than popular understanding. Normally we judge rightness or wrongness on the basis of actions externally seen, but in Buddhism emphasis is on what is going on in the mind. Again popularly morality means following moral precepts i.e., emphasis on actions performed. In Buddhism emphasis is on 'being moral' than following precepts. Being moral emphasises total personality. It is not one action that decides morality but the moral culture of the person.

Fourth noble truth is generally described as the noble eightfold path. Some books divide them into three groups. They are wisdom (*prajna*), morality (*sila*) and meditation (*samadhi*). Among the eight first two are classified in the group of wisdom, next three are in the group of morality and last three are in the group of meditation. They are

i) Right View (*samyak drsti*)

ii) Right Conception (*samyak samkalpa*)

iii) Right Speech (*samyak vak*)

iv) Right Conduct (*samyak karmanta*)

v) Right Livelihood (*samyak ajiva*)

vi) Right Effort (*samyak vyayama*)

vii) Right Mindfulness (*samyak smriti*)

viii) Right Concentration (*samyak samadhi*)

i) Right View (*samyak drsti*)

'Right view' here refers to comprehensive understanding. Its opposite wrong view then refers to one sided or excessively bent to one extreme, be it about self or about world, and that is the root cause of suffering. Thus if we want to be free from suffering we must come out of our one sidedness. Buddha came out of both extremes of 'it is' (*sasvatavada*) and 'it is not' (*uchedavada*). He gave the truth as middle way, which is the right view, claim his disciples. This truth is exposed in the form of four

noble truths and their pre-suppositions, which are dependent origination as becoming (*pratitya samutpada*), no permenant soul (*anatma*) and law of impermanence (*anitya*).

ii) Right Conception *(samyak samkalpa)*

Right conception is the decision in the mind of what is to be practically followed. As far as practice is concerned, the right view remains impractical, for it doesn't become part of the active mind. It is duty of right conception to make mind active in that way. If that is not there, wrong conception may carry the mind away. Wrong conceptions are associated with lust (*kama-samkalpa*), conception of ill-will (*byapada-samkalpa*) and conception of harm (*vihimsa-samkalpa*). The right conceptions are conceptions of renunciation (*nishkama-samkalpa*), conceptions of good will (*abyapada-samkalpa*), and conceptions of compassion (*ahimsa-samkalpa*).

iii) Right Speech (*samyak vak*)

When right view and right conception start to regulate life, they bring qualitative change in the way of speaking, behaviour and life style. Right speech is that speech which does not consist of lies, gossip, abuse and idle talk. This rule asks for restraint of speech and practice of virtues with one's speech.

iv) Right Conduct (*samyak karmanta*)

This noble truth asks the practitioner (*sadhaka*) to abstain from wrong actions. This contains famous "*Pancha-Sila*" – the five vows for desisting from killing, stealing, sensuality, lying and intoxication. Killing refers to destruction of the life of any being. He who takes away life or instigates another to do so is guilty of this crime. Stealing is taking away of that which is not given. Sensuality or adultery is the holding of carnal intercourse with the female that belongs to another. Lying is one among the four sins of the speech. Others are slander, abuse and unprofitable conversation. Intoxication refers to intentional drinking of any liquor. This is forbidden because it is the root cause of all other sins. For liquor takes away the rationality and morality of the one who is under the grip of liquor, and he commits all types of sins.

v) Right Livelihood (*samyak ajiva*)

Right Livelihood refers to earning one's everyday living by honest means. This rule tells the practitioner (*sadhaka*) that even for the sake of maintaining one's life one should not take to forbidden means, but work in consistency with good determination.

vi) Right Effort *(samyak vyayama)*

Right effort refers to mind control. Mind is the root where all types of tendencies reside, whether they are good or wicked passions. Sometimes undesirable ideas may haunt the mind, and hence mind control is needed. Sins of the mind are covetousness, malice and scepticism. They need to be controlled. One cannot progress steadily unless he maintains a constant effort to root out old evil thoughts and prevent new evil thoughts from arising. Again since mind cannot be kept empty, he should constantly endeavour to fill the mind with good ideas and retain such ideas in the mind. These four are the right efforts.

vii) Right Mindfulness *(samyak smrti)*

This rule further stress constant vigilance, constantly keeping in mind the good things he has already learned. He should constantly remember and contemplate the body as body, sensations as sensations, mind as mind, mental states as mental states and contemplate on the frail, loathsome and perishable nature of things. These help us remain free from attachment and grief.

viii) Right Concentration (*samyak samadhi*)

Buddhism speaks of four stages of concentration. The first stage is dhyana or meditation on four noble truths. Here mind makes its reasoning and investigation about truths. At the second stage of concentration there is no reasoning and investigation, but an unaffected contemplation. Here still the practitioner enjoys an experience of joy, peace and internal tranquillity. At the third stage one detaches himself even from joy of concentration, attitude of indifference increases, still conscious of the ease and equanimity he experiences. At the last stage one puts away even the ease and equanimity and all senses of joy and happiness he earlier had. This is a stage of perfect equanimity, indifference and self-possession. Here he attains the desired goal of nirvana, the right view in its perfection.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. What are the noble truths of Buddha? Explain.

…..
....
....
....
....
....

2. Elaborate the ways of cessation of suffering.

…..
....

....
....
....

2.3 PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BUDDHA'S TEACHING

We know Buddha as an ethical teacher and founder of religion who gave the eightfold path. Can one be a founder of a religion without being a philosopher or without having philosophical ideas as the foundation for these teachings? It is not possible. For religion is moulding of life in the light of reality as one sees it and knowledge of the nature of that reality shapes ideals of life. Thus philosophy is pre-supposition of religion. Sometimes religious teachers will grow from the existing philosophy of the time, without questioning it. But Buddha was not satisfied with the philosophy of the times. He questioned theory and practice of Vedic sacrifice, theory and practice of 'soul-realization' and theory and practice of 'this-life-alone' holders. He comes to a new vision, accepting the spiritual, accepting morality, but rejecting 'permanence' and 'soul' or 'substantiality'. That which is 'not-permanent' breeds suffering. Everything is not-permanent. Hence, '*sarvam dukkam'*. His vision springs from awareness of the causal genesis of things and ideas (*pratitya samutpada*), their impermanence and insubstantiality.

Theory of dependent origination *(pratitya samutpada)*

This is the central conception of the system of Buddha. This is the Buddhist theory of causation. This explains the nature of existence. He said "leave aside the questions of the beginning and end. I will instruct you in the Law (*dharma* of Buddhism). If 'that' is, 'this' comes to be; on the springing up of 'that', 'this' springs up. If 'that' is not, 'this' does not come to be; on the cessation of 'that', 'this' ceases". This is the common description of dependent origination. This exposes most salient features of Buddha's conception of the principle of dependent origination. There is a temporal relation between the 'that' and 'this'. 'This' is an experiential component. For 'this' refers to the effect that is experienced rather than inferred. And 'that' refers to the cause that has already been experienced. Formulating the principle of dependent origination in this manner, the Buddha attempts to avoid the search for any mysterious entity or substance in the explanation of phenomena. Avoiding mysterious entity or substance does not mean abandoning all enquiry and go to absolute scepticism. Rather it represents the acceptance of a middle standpoint and he calls it right view. In *Kaccayanagotta-sutta,* when question asked about 'right view' Buddha said; .... "this world, is generally inclined toward two views: existence and non-existence. To him who perceives with right wisdom the uprising of the world as it has come to be, the notion of non-existence in the world does not occur. To him who perceives with right wisdom the ceasing of the world as it has come to be, the notion of existence in the world does not occur.

The world for the most part, is bound by approach, grasping and inclination. And he who does not follow that approach and grasping, that determination of the mind, that inclination and disposition, who does not cling to or adhere to a view, "this is my

self", who thinks "suffering that is subject to arising arises; suffering that is subject to ceasing, ceases" such a person does not doubt, is not perplexed ..... there is "right view" (that leads to liberation).

"Everything exists" is one extreme. "Everything does not exist" is the other extreme. Without approaching either extreme, the *Tathagata* teaches you a doctrine of the middle....(then follows exposition of 12 factors of *bhava chakra* as causes of suffering). This we already saw in the second noble truth, where he applied this theory of causation (*pratitya samutpada*) in the origin of suffering. Like that in other fields too his disciples apply it. In the field of Logic it is law of identity. Something is, is; is not, is and is not. When it is applied in metaphysics it becomes theory of momentariness (everything in constant flux, changing from cause to effect). And when applied in ethics it becomes law of karma as every action leaves its effect. This principle of dependent arising is an alternative to the Brahminical notion of eternal self (*atman*) as well as to the Carvaka rejection of spirituality. As an alternative Buddha explains phenomena as a state of being in constant arising and ceasing. What is it that arises and ceases, they say '*dharmas'*. It does justice to the need of both permanence and change to explain our experience and ethics.

Doctrine of Universal change or impermanence (*Sarvam anitya)*

The metaphysical application of law of dependent arising arrived by investigation and analysis of the empirical, is the doctrine of universal change. All things are combination of '*dharmas'* and subject to change and decay. Since they all originate from some condition, it disappears when the condition ceases to be. Whatever has a beginning has an end. Buddha therefore says "know that whatever exists arises from causes and conditions and is in every respect impermanent. That which seems everlasting perishes, that which is high will be laid low; where meeting is, parting will be; where birth is, death will come". This is doctrine of impermanence. When this is brought to its logical conclusion, by asking the question, how one thing can become another if it is not continuously changing. If not changing it will remain as it is, if it remains as it is, it will never change combination of *dharmas* too become impossible. If there is no change, we cannot explain our experience, morality cannot be explained, for morality in order to be meaningful actions should bear fruit, no fruit without change. If change, change must be at all moments. If at one moment it is permanent, then it will go on like that for ever. For Buddhism does not accept of an external mover.

No-soul theory (*anatma*)

From the beginning of human reflection up to now, one prominent theme is 'soul'. But it is known by different names. To the primitive man inside him or in any animal that lives and moves there is a living principle, a man inside a man or an animal inside an animal that we call 'soul'. This is animism. As religion becomes refined soul concept also becomes refined. But in one form or another we see it in living religions of Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam. They teach a man's personality or self

is his soul, known by different names like '*atman'*, *pudgala*, *pneuma*, or psyche which enters body at birth and quits at death. The common element is, it is the invisible, immaterial ego, the 'I' that is unchangeable amidst everything that is changing, the 'Lord' of the body and mind. Those who hold that, there is a soul that exists say, without a soul there could be no immortality, without immortality life would not be worth living. The existence of a soul alone could ensure to each individual the fruit of his actions; without soul there could be no reward in heaven or punishment in hell and without it transmigration could not be explained, and so also we cannot explain differences between man and man in character, position, peculiarities and fate.

For Buddha such a permanent soul, a permanent self is the most deceitful of illusions, the basic wrong view that leads man into the pit of sorrow and suffering. In order to be a Buddhist practitioner first thing that is to be rejected is such a belief in permanent self. The reason given is – self naturally produces attachment, and attachment to it leads to egoism, craving for pleasure and aversion to pain on earth and then beyond in heaven. So search for soul is a wrong start, and wrong start will lead in false direction. "Some say that the 'I' endures after death, others say it perishes, both have fallen into a grievous error. For if the 'I' is perishable the fruit people strive for will perish too, and then deliverance will be without merit. If, as the others say, the 'I' does not perish, it must be always identical and unchanging, then moral aims and salvation would be unnecessary". Because of this logical difficulty, Buddha kept that matter in the 'inexplicable'. This silence of Buddha was explained differently by different schools, though all agree 'soul' does not exist. First systematic exposition of that we have in the book "*The Questions of King Menandros" (Milindapancha)*. Here Nagasena the monk convinces the king with the example of chariot, there is no permanent personality, but only name and form, i.e. the five groups (*skandas*), which continuously cease and arise anew.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. How does Buddhism understand the reality as dependent?

…...
....
....
....
....
....

2. Describe the Buddhist notion of 'self'.

…...
....
....
....
....

2.4 LET US SUM UP

Buddhism as we see today is a big forest with such a lot of variety of trees in it. Though the schools and sects keep up their uniqueness, they all claim that they give the Master's teaching. Modern times when study of Buddhism was rejuvenated in Europe, a fresh scientific enquiry into what is later and what is the core was taken up. All unanimously agree on the so-called four noble truths (*catur aryasatyani*) as Buddha's own words and contains a summary of his teaching and gives theoretical framework of philosophy for Buddhists everywhere. Among these truths, the first, the truth of suffering is the basis of Buddhist ontology. The second, the truth of the Origin of Suffering is the basis of Buddhist psychology or the ontology of the mental. The third, the truth of the cessation of suffering is the basis of Buddhism as a religion. The fourth, the truth of the path leading to cessation of suffering, is the basis of Buddhism as a moral and meditational practice. All the later developments in any of these fields have this same fundamental heritage – the vision of Buddha. It is presented as '*sarvam dukkam', 'sarvam anatmam'* and *'sarvam anityam*'. If we ask the question why everything is suffering? The answer is because it is impermanent. Why is it impermanent? Because it is dependently originated. Why is it dependently originated? The answer is, it is like that. We experience it like that.

2.5 KEY WORDS

Dharmas (*dhamma* in Pali): in Buddhism are the elements of existence. These are grouped into 5 *Skandhas*, 18 *dhatus* and 12 *ayatanas* and their subdivisions. They explain Buddhist ontology.

Reality: It means the sum total of elements (*dharmas*) with which everything is made of, and with in which we comprehend everything.

Religion: In Buddhism refers to spirituality, not to worship of personal God. In a broader sense it refers to a belief that liberation from a frustrating and painful existence or from eternally repeated existence is possible and can be achieved through appropriate mental and moral practices.

2.6 FURTHER READING AND REFERENCES

Chaterjee, S.C & D.M. Datta. *An Introduction To Indian Philosophy.* Calcutta: University Of Calcutta, 1984.

Dutt, Nalinaksha. *Early Monastic Buddhism.* Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukopadhyay, 1971.

Edward, Thomas J. *The History Of Buddhist Thought.* New York: Dover Publications, 2002.

Frauwallner, Erich. *The Philosophy Of Buddhism (Die Philosophie Des Buddhismus)*, Trans. Gelong Lodro Sangpo. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2010.

Kalupahana, David J. *A History Of Buddhist Philosophy; Continuities And Discontinuities.* Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1994.

Nakamura, Hajme. *Indian Buddhism, A Survey With Bibliographical Notes.* Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, 2007.

UNIT 3 BUDDHISM – II

Contents

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In the 20th and 21st century so many Eastern and Western scholars wrote volumes and volumes on Buddhism. Still if you ask what is Buddhism it is not easy to give an all agreeing and all comprehensive answer. This is because of its vastness and complexity. To know Buddhism in its varied developments is a Herculean task. For it extends in so many lands and languages. Again it has a history of 2500 years. From the simple practical teachings for liberation by Buddha, his disciples went so far, especially by explaining the inexplicable (*avyakrtas*). Thus we have lot of sects and sub-sects and schools and sub-schools (Division into sects is on the basis of differences in discipline and division into schools is on the basis of metaphysical & epistemological distinctions). To study the distinctions of each sect and school spoken of in different scriptures of Buddhism is not easy; *Katavattu*, one canonical early 2nd century B.C.E text speaks of some 18 sects. Some modern texts on Buddhism enumerate as many as 65 sects and some others speak of more. Here for our study we take up the traditionally accepted four schools in India. They are Vaibhasika, Sautrantika, Madhyamika and Yogacara. Each school claims they hold the 'middle way' of Buddha. The first two belong to Hinayana tradition (Early Buddhism, *Abhidharma* Buddhism, Staviravada, Philosophy of the Elders, Theravada Buddhism, Sarvastivada Buddhism, Southern Buddhism, Exoteric Buddhism – all these names emphasise one or the other aspect of this tradition) and the last two belong to Mahayana tradition (Later Buddhism, Developed Buddhism, Northern Buddhism, Esoteric Buddhism) within Buddhism. We expose the main metaphysical views of these schools and their distinctions.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy always fascinated man, for he needs answers to all 'why's and 'how's of all that we are and what we come in contact with. Wise men begin their enquiry by critically examining the answers already given and evaluate their merits and demerits. Some will go that far to ask the question of 'why' about the multiplicity of those answers. Buddha was such a man, and he got enlightenment about their basic 'problem!', that they are all '*dristis'*, (ways of looking at reality), which is basically limited because of human predicament of conceptual limitation. He understood not only the limitation of those '*dristis'*, but also the harm that it can do, if we cling to it. Thus from practical angle he said, let us put aside these enquires, and be practical.

We already referred to his classical simile of man struck by poisonous arrow (Refer previous unit).

A charismatic personality like Buddha could manage like that, but not his disciples after his demise. They were forced to give reasons for their interpretation, not only to outsiders, but also to insiders. Most important reason for this is the potential within his teaching for diverse interpretation. The immediate followers of Buddha even had their difference of opinion about Buddha's teaching. Within a century after the *parinirvana* of Buddha there came a clear cult division in his '*Sangha'*. Orthodox group or traditionalists or conservatives is known as *Staviras* or *Theras* or Elders and Progressives known as *Mahasangikas*. Elders claimed to represent the original teaching of Buddha. Others said Buddha taught something more than what these elders say. Elders called them as '*papabhikkus'* or '*adhamavadins'* (those who practice and teach wrong things). According to elders Buddha was a historical man. He was born, lived and died among them as a human being. But for the other group Buddha was more than a man. He is a God. The moral goal of *Staviras* is attainment of each one's *nirvana*. The other group said this is egoistic. Buddha's goal was not that. *Bodhisattva* should be the ideal; they do not care about one's *nirvana* until all attain nirvana. Again for elders the ideal was attainment of *Arhathood*. But *Mahasangikas* claimed an *arhat* can go wrong and that cannot be the ideal state, rather it must be realization of Buddhahood. About empirical knowledge too there was distinction between the two as *Staviras* (elders) were realists, but *mahasangikas* were more idealistic in their leanings. *Staviras* denied a soul or substance in everything, but they believed in *dharmas* or elements of existence as really existing. But *mahasangikas* denied substantiality for both. Everything is unsubstanial (*sunya*) was their position and this becomes ripe and fully grown into Mahayana.

3.2 MAIN HINAYANA SCHOOLS

The philosophy of *Staviras* or Elders we can call as *Abhidharma*. *Abhidharma* is actually philosophical reflections by realistic and pluralistic philosophers of Buddhism (Theravada or Hinayana) on the basic teachings of Buddha. The literal meaning of the term '*Abhi'* is 'further' or 'about'. Thus *Abhidharma* means the higher, further or special *Dharma*, or 'the discourse on *Dharma*'. *Dharma* here refers to all the elements with which everything is made of. If we analyse everything we can reduce the whole of subject and object (whole reality) into 75 *dharmas*. These realistic philosophers were known as Sarvastivadins. '*Sarvam asti'* means 'everything is' (these are realistic pluralistic philosophers) but only as elements not having a *pudgal* or soul. This is in fact the first philosophical development in Buddhism.

3.3 VAIBHASIKA SCHOOL

The word Vaibhasika has come from the main text *Mahavibhasasastra*, which was compiled around 2nd century C.E; its main object was to expose *Abhidharma*

philosophy. Another classical text of this school is Vasabandhu's (420-500 C.E.) *Abhidharma-kosa*. Actually Vaibhasika is the later form of Sarvastivada.

These Sarvastivadin philosophers transformed Buddha's 'no soul' into a consistent philosophy of '*pudgal nairatmaya'* (non-substantiality of everything). Non-substantiality is not only in the case of human beings, but is applied to the whole material world. 'Things are without essence'. If we say they are unsubstantial, then what are they? This group answers that they are collection of *dharmas*. In the case of material things, there are four material atoms, and in the case of living beings five *skandas*. We see exposition of this in both *Milinda pancho*, a second century C.E. text and *Abhidharmakosa* of Vasabandhu of 4th century C.E.

Another view that is closely connected with this insubstantiality is the idea of momentariness of all entities. Buddha's '*anityam'* (impermanence) had a limited application, in the case of morality, but they applied it consistently on everything. Unlike Samkhya, who thought of a permanent thing behind all change, exposed by the image of lump of clay that turns into pot still doesn't lose its 'clayness', Vaibhasika clung to Buddhist insubstantiality and impermanence and exposed it with the example of wood being consumed. When wood is consumed by fire, only ashes remain and it is completely different from wood. Still they accepted three moments in this change; past, present and future; that which causes that which is destroyed and that which endures.

They explained the whole of universe with 75 *dharmas* and enumerated them in detail. We see it in *Abhidhammakosa*. First they divide *dharmas* into conditioned (*samskrta*) and unconditioned (*asamskrta*). 72 are conditioned and 3 are unconditioned. The conditioned are again divided into four classes:

I Form (11 *dharmas*) consisting of the five sense organs, five sense-objects, and form with no manifestations. These are also known as rupa and they form all that we call matter.

II Consciousness (1 *Dharma*) sometimes divided into five *dharmas* corresponding to the sense-organs. This is also known as citta.

III The concomitant mental functions (46 *dharmas*). They are also known as *caitasika*. They are subdivided into four groups.

i) The general mental elements are 10 universals (sarva-*Dharma-sadharana*). They are contact, attention, sensation, ideation, will, desire to do, conviction, recollection, concentration and insight.

ii) The general good functions are 10 moral universals (*kusala-mahabhumika*). They are faith, shame, the root of good, absence of greed, absence of hatred, absence of delusion, diligence, harmoniousness, attentiveness, equanimity and non-violence.

iii) The general foul functions are 6 defilements of mind that hinders one from following the path. They are passion, hate, pride, ignorance, erroneous view and doubt.

iv) Minor foul functions are altogether 20 mental functions that are minor defilements for the practice of eight fold path. They are anger, resentment, hypocrisy, spitefulness, envy, miserliness, deceitfulness, dissimulation, wantonness, malevolence, unrestraint, shamelessness, rigidity, agitation, lack of faith, laziness, negligence, forgetfulness, distractedness and thoughtlessness.

IV 14 *dharmas* that have no connection with form or mind (citta-viprayukta-*sanskara*) They are like acquisition, non-acquisition, communionship, effects of meditation, power of longevity (vital power), the waves of becoming, words and sentences related to speech.

The remaining three are unconditioned elements. They are Space (*akasa*), extinction (*nirvana*) caused by absence of productive cause (*apratisamkhyanirodha*) and extinction caused by knowledge (*pratisamkhyanirodha*). That which provides ground to matter is space. In itself it has no defilement and it is not caused. Again *apratisamkhyanirodha* is that *Dharma*, where no type of defilement is present. In *pratisamkyanirodha Dharma* there is right view that occasions *nirvana*. If we look into the above list, we see the importance they give to mental activities. In fact they make a psychological analysis of everything. Their naive realism forced them to dogmatically emphasise everything that are exposed above as existing independent of the subject. The next school that we are going to speak of comes up in the context of logical and rational questioning of above enumeration of *dharmas* as independently existing.

3.4. SAUTRANTIKA SCHOOL

The word *sautrantika* comes from '*sutranta'* (scripture). They base themselves on '*Sukta pitaka'* of the canon. This group came up against the naive realism and pluralism of Vaibhasikas. Main teachers of this school are Kumaralat, a contemporary of Nagarjuna. Srilabha or Srilata was his disciple. Then comes Yasomitra and Harivarman who wrote the book *Tattvasiddhi* (Proof of the Truth). Another name notable is Vasubandhu (some say this is the same Vasubandu who wrote *Abhidharmakosa* and some others say it is another one by the same name). It is a logico-epistemological school. (there is a later logico-epistemological school having characteristics of both Sautrantika and Yogacara. The main personalities are Dignaga and Dharmakirti (5^{th} & 7^{th} century C.E.). The reason for this is universities like Nalanda and Takshashila where issues are followed, not the sectarianism of schools, one becomes acharya, when he is proficient in teachings of all schools, and it was very easy for them to form their own philosophy by taking the logically fitting teachings). They said *Abhidharma* scholasticism is a deviation from the actual intent of the Master. They rejected independent existence of some of the *dharmas* and reduced their number into 45 (43 Conditioned and 2 unconditioned). If we ask the question what is it that forced them to reduce the number of *dharmas*, we must say it has both metaphysical and epistemological reasons.

The realism of Vaibhasika forced them to treat Nirvana too as some 'thing'. Sautrantika said this is against the mind of the master. So they clung to 'Sukta Pitaka'

and based their interpretation on that and reason (for Buddha said '*atta dipo bhava*'). Logically, they said, the Vaibhasika clinging to three moments is not possible, for if anything changing, it must happen at all moments and one thing will last only a moment, where birth and death happens; so no past, present and future, only present is existing. Past and future are imagination (*sankalpas*).

Epistemology (Pramanas) and Acceptance of external objects and mind

Sautrantika developed logic and defended itself against both Buddhistic and non-Buddhistic criticisms. This logic was later developed and crystallized by the Yogacara (*vijnanavada*) teachers. Dignaga and Dharmakirti are the two towering personalities. First they were Sautrantika (both mind and external objects exist), later they were lenient to Yogacara (mind only exists). Dignaga in his famous work *Pramana Samuchaya* speak of two valid means of knowledge. They are Perception (*pratyaksa*) and Inference (*anumana*). Perception deals with *svalaksanas*, (that which characterises itself, a unique particular singular and momentary). This is ultimately real (*paramarta sat*) and inexpressible. To experience them means to experience reality as it is. Inference, the other *pramana* consists of conceptualizations, verbalizations, reflections and other products of mental constructions. (*kalpana*, *vikalpa*) Dignaga calls it *Samanyalaksana* (a general characteristic applicable to many objects or distributed over many instances). They are endurable and not subject to change, thus they are true only in relational level (*asamvrti sat*).

Epistemologically Sautrantika goes a step further from Vaibhasika to answer the question, what we really know. They say it is not objects that come into our consciousness (naive realism) but an after-image of an object. Thus our knowledge is not through perception, but through inference. Therefore there will be always some mental construction. Thus we call them representative realists or critical realists.

Theory of Momentariness

Vaibhasika developed Buddha's notion of '*anitya'* into universal law of impermanence of everything, but they accepted three moments as "a thing arises, remains constant and ceases to exist". But being logically minded, Sautrantika raised the question, if changing, how can there be three moments, there can be only one moment. As it arises it must vanish. Thus things never remain constant. What is there is an uninterrupted flow of causally connected momentary entities of the same kind. The cessation takes place without cause. They call it Santana. If it were not so, then the *dharmas* would remain constant and changeless. They define moment (*ksana*) as the smallest indivisible unit of time. This is 1/75th of a second. All aggregates of being are repeatedly produced and destroyed in every moment. Since these elements succeed upon each other so fast, as in cinematography were distinct pictures in a rapid projection, evokes illusion of continuous action on the screen, we see them as continuous. Again earlier and later ones within one Santana are almost alike we normally fail to discern the arising and destruction and perceive them like flowing river or flame of a lamp. According to this doctrine, all objects of the world - our

bodies, ideas, emotions and all the external objects around us – are destroyed every moment and are replaced by similar things generated at the succeeding moment, which again are replaced by other similar things at the next moment and so on.

One important logical consequence of this theory is the rejection of past and future. Everything is happening at the present time, past has ceased and future hasn't arisen. Past is memory and future is imagination. There is only just origination and cessation. This is the real truth (*paramarta sat*). The other two are relative truths (*samvrti sat*). One question that naturally arises is, how we explain 'the knowing process' then? They explain it with the theory of *svasamvedana* (self-apperception). This theory says consciousness is able to be conscious of itself and of other phenomena, just like a lamp is able to illumine clearly both itself as well as other external objects.

Sautrantika classification of *Dharma*

They have a different classification of *Dharma* from that of Vaibhasika. While Vaibhasika accepts 75 *dharmas*, Sautrantika reduces that number into 45. This includes 43 samkrta and 2 asmskrta. 43 samskrtas they divide into five *skandas*.

i) Form (*rupa*): consists of matter in its 4 primary forms (*upadana*) and 4 derived (*upadaya*) forms. 4 primary forms are earth, water, fire and air. 4 derived forms are solidity, humidity, heat and motion.

ii) Feeling (*vedana*): consists of 3 types of emotions- pleasure, pain and neutral.

iii) Perception (*samjna*): consists of grasping by 6 senses – five senses and mind. It consists of colours etc by eyes, agreeable, disagreeable, friend, enemy, male female etc.

iv) Consciousness (*vijnana*): consists of 6 sense consciousness. It is "row grasping of visual, auditory, olfactory, taste, touch and mental consciousness.

v) Mental formation (*samskara*): consists of volitional factors that create and determine the five *skandas* of future existence. Sautrantika speaks of 10 virtuous and 10 non-virtuous *dharmas*.

vi) Unconditioned (*asamskrta*): consists of 2 uncaused *dharmas* - Nirvana and space.

Sautrantika is a transition thought on the way to full-fledged Mahayana. Later schools of Madhyamaka and Yogacara develop in their own way the '*Sautrantika* germs'. Madhyamika continues the logical pruning of *dharmas* that was started by Sautrantika and reduces them all into samvrti satya. Yogacara cling to *Svasamvedana* and give reason for it with their *Vijnaptimatrata*.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. What are the noble truths of Buddha? Explain.

…...
....
....
....
....
....

2. Elaborate the ways of cessation of suffering.

…...
....
....
....
....

3.5. MAIN SCHOOLS IN MAHAYANA TRADITION

Mahayana literally means 'great vehicle'. This is a term coined by those members of the Buddhism who believed in things that the early school considered as not the real teaching of Buddha. But this group got so many adherents and they formed their own scriptures as taught by Buddha. This group called the other group as old style conservative Buddhists, who were not able to grasp the higher teaching, so Buddha did not reveal it to them. Now time is ripe for that teaching of Buddha to make public.

3.6. MADHYAMAKA SCHOOL

Madhyamaka is the name of the school and one who follows the teaching of that school is known as a Madhyamika. This is also known as *Sunyavada* and it is systematised by Nagarjuna (2nd century A.D), whom they consider as the founder of this school. His famous work is *MulaMadhyamikaKarika*. His disciple was Aryadeva who wrote *Catush Shataka*. The name of this school comes from Buddha's famous 'middle position' (*madhyama pratipad*). Hinayana schools mostly took its ethical implication i.e., not going to the extremes of indulgence or practice. But this school takes it in a metaphysical sense. Middle position is the rejection of the extreme metaphysical positions of 'is' and 'is not' (*Sasvatavada* and *Uchedavada*). Thus it becomes the no-position (transcendental and inexpressible) and they used the word '*Sunyata'* to explain it. In the later development of this school we see division into two: Svatantrika Madhyamaka and Prasangika Madhyamaka. A famous name connected with *Svatantrika* is Bhavaviveka (6th Century A.D) who proposes independent argument for substantiating their position. Prasangika School claims that Madhyamaka is a 'no-position' school, thus it does not have any independent argument. What it has is its dialectics. It uses '*prasanga'* (*reducio ad absurdum*), in the argument of the opponent only to show the inconsistency within them. Main champions of this trend are Buddhapalita and Chandrakirti (6th and 7th Century C.E.).

Use of '*sunya'* and '*sunyata'*:

Sunyata is the most perplexing word in Buddhist philosophy. Non-Buddhists have interpreted it only as nihilism. In Madhamaka philosophy this term becomes so important that the whole system is known as *Sunyavada*. It has both ontological and soteriological implications.

a) **Ontological implication**

Here '*sunya'* is used to characterize the whole reality. Reality they divide into two - *samvrti* sat (relative reality) and *paramarta* sat (absolute reality). It was a common understanding that everything has a '*svabhava'* (own being, essential property - in orthodox systems, belief in permanent soul). Madhyamaka rejects this as having any independent existence. Thus they speak of both *pudgal nairatmya* and *Dharma nairatmya*. Earlier *Abhidharma* rejected whole (*pudgal*) as construction, a name given without real existence. Now the same reason is applied by Mahayanists to show *dharmas* too are construction (main argument is denial of atomism). They understand *pratityasamutpada* as conditioned existence. They say '*svabhava'* must be that which is not produced by causes, which was not dependent upon anything else. There is nothing like that in our experience, for everything is conditionally originated. Since they are interdependent they are '*sunya'* of '*svabhava'*, thus for them all *dharmas* are '*svabhava sunya'*. Secondly they call the absolute reality too '*sunya'* but here *Prapancha-sunya* or devoid of *prapancha* or verbalization, thought-construction and plurality. (The meaning is - Reality that which is not conditionally originated is beyond thought-construction, beyond any expression in words.)

b) **Soteriological implication** (that which is concerned with salvation)

This comes from the practical aim of attaining '*prajna paramita'*. Here we understand sunyata as means for attaining an end. (the state of Bodhisatva, the realization of *tathata*, tathagata or *tathagata-garbha*, *Dharma*-kaya, bodhichitta, realization of *sunyata*, *Nirvana* - all these refer to one or other aspect of *prajna paramita* in Madhyamaka which is also the Absolute). This comes through meditation on '*sunyata'*. *Sunyata* tells us that all empirical things are devoid of substantial reality, so they are worthless and because of our *avidya* we cling to insubstantial as substantial and crave for it. Here happens the germination of all passions and desires. Once *sunyata* of *dharmas* are realized, this mad rush after worldly things will go and detachment will come. Meditation on *sunyata* will lead to '*prajna'* (transcendental wisdom) which brings emancipation of the practitioner from spiritual darkness. This is the attainment of status of bodhisattva which consists in bodhicitta with its twofold aspects of *Sunyata* or *pranja* and *Karuna*. *Karuna* here refers to compassion or universal love.

i) ***Samvrti satya* (*vyvaharika*) and *Paramartha satya*** (phenomena and absolute; *samsara* and *nirvana*; appearance and reality). Like every rational, idealistic systems Madhyamaka too accepts two levels of reality. The empirically cognisable, that which is conditioned, that which can be known through categories of thought, that which is causally connected they call as *samvrti satya* or phenomena or *samsara*. That which is beyond the categories of thought, that which is unconditioned, that which is inexpressible, they call *paramarta satya* or absolute or *nirvana (paramarto aryanam thusnibhava* = to the saints, the Absolute is just silence i.e. it is inexpressible says Chandrakirti). Now it is the question of their relationship. Here Madyamaka

brings out its ingenuity. They say actually there are no two. But only one and when you look at it through relativity (thought-forms, categories of reason), then it became empirical reality which is *nissvabhavata*, a covering over reality. But the same when you look through the eye of *sunyata* i.e. by removing the veil of primal ignorance that makes it relative to *samvrti*, then it is *paramarta* or absolute reality. Thus *samvrti* is like means (upaya) for reaching Reality that is the goal (*upeya*). Thus there is no *paramarta* without *samvrti* and no *samvrti* without *paramarta*.

ii) Madhayamaka Dialectic

In fact this is the original contribution of Nagarjuna to Buddhism and Indian Philosophy in general. Buddha was silent about many questions. Now Nagarjuna asks the question, why he kept silence at the so called '*avyakrtas.'* Not because he did not know the answer, but because he knew well that such speculations will lead only to dogmatism. All metaphysical positions are one-sided. For reality is transcendent to thought constructions. To prove this he invents the dialectic with four alternatives (*catuskoti* or *tetralemma*). They are i) a positive thesis, ii) a negative counter-thesis; iii) they are conjunctively affirmed to form the third alternative and iv) disjunctively denied to form the fourth. He reduced all metaphysical systems (*drstis*) into one of these categories and applied rigorous logic to it and showed the inner inconsistencies within the system. Yes-or-No answer to fundamental questions could not do justice to the truth and if we do so, it becomes dogmatism is the basic line of thought of Nagarjuna.

Madhyamaka is not a '*drsti'* (metaphysical system) but a critique of all philosophies – a meta-philosophy, which helps one be aware of what he is doing, while philosophizing - checking of pre-suppositions and assumptions unnoticed. In one sense Madhyamaka may seem the most intolerant of systems, as it negates all possible views without exception. In another sense it can accommodate and give significance to all systems and shades of views. For, he realizes *sunyata* and it gives him inner harmony and peace.

3.7. YOGACARA (VIJNANAVADA) SCHOOL

Yogacara is the other Mahayana school that we study in this unit. Yogacara is also known as *Vijnanavada*. It is the only idealistic school in Buddhism and Indian philosophy in the strict sense. It is not only idealism, but also absolutism. As a metaphysical system it comes up against the extreme nihilism of Madhyamika. If you say everything is *sunya* (illusory) having no '*svabhava'*, then that is against common-sense. So they said something that projects illusion is real. What is it that projects illusion? It is '*alaya-vijnana'* (the ground, the power that creates material world and projects outside) says Yogacara. Madyamaka claimed, it has no metaphysical position, it is only dialectics, but we cannot go far without metaphysics (some ground). Yogacara says Pure Consciousness (*Vijnaptimatrata*) provides the ground and this alone is real, and everything else is its self-bifurcation. Thus Yogacara is an absolutistic system. Epistemologically Yogacara idealism is the logical culmination of Buddhist 'momentariness'. Sautrantika analysis of knowledge exposed the

contradiction inherent in perception, when we explain it in the context of momentariness. The only way out is falling back to subjective and idealism of Yogacara solves it. According to Yogacara its idealism is the 'middle way' (*madhyama pratipad*). The two extremes are realism and nihilism. The object is real and exists like the subject is one extreme and it is represented in realistic Sarvastivada. The subject is unreal and non-existent like object is the other extreme represented by Madhyamaka. The middle position between the two is that the object is unreal and is a fiction of the subjective; the subject is the real and the sole reality. The appearances are unreal; but that which appears is real.

Yogacara philosophy has two phases. The first phase is strictly idealistic. This is mainly 4th and 5th century A.D. Important persons and works related with this phase are Maitreya, his famous work is *Abhisamayalankara*. His disciple Asanga, wrote *Madhyanta Vibhaga Sutra* and *Mahayana Sutralankara.* Asanga's younger brother Vasabandhu (who was first Sarvastivadin and later converted into Mahayana by his elder brother) is one of the most prominent figures in the history of Buddhism. He wrote the most complete and definitive text on the Yogacara idealism known as *Vijnaptimatratasiddhi.* Stiramati was his disciple who wrote commentaries on his works. With him the first phase of Yogacara idealism is over.

Most important persons in the second phase are Dignaga and Dharmakirti. They were not interested in the constructive details of the idealistic metaphysics. The interest shifted from metaphysics to logic and epistemology. Idealism was maintained from the standpoint of ultimate reality; but, in order to supply a stable basis for the logic of empirical reality, the Sautrantika conception of a thing-in-itself (*svalaksana*) was revived. This resulted in the formation of the hybrid school of the Sautrantika-Yogacara, for which the name Vijnanavada can be reserved. Famous work of Dignaga is *Alambhanapariksa* and Dharmakirti's work is *Pramanavarttika*.

i) Idealism of Yogacara

Realism and Idealism are the two opposing epistemological positions. Realist will say the content known and the cognition (consciousness of the object) are two independent realities. The duty of consciousness is only to reveal the object not to create it. If it creates, then each time when we perceive, object will be altered but this is not the case. But for Yogacara, consciousness is the only reality. The so-called empirical world is only a system of ideas. The objective content is only apparent, and is really identical with its cognition. These content and cognition are invariably perceived together (*sahopalambhaniyama*) and are therefore identical. If the content were different from cognition it should exist separately and must be perceived apart from the latter but this is not the case. Yogacara concludes that knowledge is not a mere discovery of something that is already there as realist says, but consciousness creates and projects its own content when it knows.

Yogacara proves its conclusion both by disproving the claim of realism and by giving independent arguments. If, as the realist says, consciousness only reveals the object then it must be able to reveal at all times and each time it must be similar. But

actually, how and under what circumstances we look at it, the colour, shape, size etc changes. Then how we decide whether they exist in the object or in the consciousness? Positively they give the example of dreams where consciousness creates and projects as objects. The theory that all our experiential world is like a dream, without real content, and are creation and projection of consciousness, is rejection of all objectivity. It goes against all our subject-object co-operation world experience. So they must show that idealism does not do any violence to our everyday world of experience. They do it with their theory of evolution of consciousness

ii) Theory of evolution of Consciousness

Here we expose Yogacara metaphysics proper. For according to them *Vijnana* only exists (*vinjaptimatrata*). But they have to explain the whole panorama of empirical existence. They explain it with diversification of *vijnana*, which is by nature creative. They speak of different stages of this process. They are mainly three. This is caused by illusory idea of objectivity and once it is eradicated, they revert to the pristine purity of *Vijnaptimatrata*. The main stages of evolution are: a) storehouse consciousness (*alaya-vijnana*) – the place or receptor in which are contained the seeds or impressions (*vasanas*) of all karmas, good, bad or indifferent. All *dharmas* come out of it as effects or evolutes. So it is known as *sarva-bijaka*. *Alaya* serves two functions. 1) Receptor of the impressions of past *vijnanas* 2) gives rise to further *vijnanas* by maturing those impressions. This always goes on in *alaya-vijnana*, till true knowledge dawns. The second stage in evolution of consciousness is known as *Klista-manas* (psyche governed by *klesas*). It is in fact the mediator between first (alaya) and third (pravrti). In the *alaya* '*bija'* is indeterminate and in pravrti it is fully determinate, and the transition is done by the Klista-manas, in the form categorisation. In Yogacara '*manas'* is refered to as '*klista'* (defiled). For ignorance is without a beginning (*anadi*), but can be removed with practice (Yogacara). *Klistas* in *manas* are four. They are a) the false notion of an ego (*atmadrsti*), b) ignorance about ego (*atmamoha*), c) elation over it (*atmamana*), d) attachment to it (*atmaprema*). In fact what are to be removed are these intellections and all practices are for that. The third stage of evolution of consciousness is determinate awareness of the object. In the empirical discourse these only matter. They are of six forms. The five external senses and one internal sense of mind (this mind is different from *klista-manas*. *Klista-manas* is transcendental but this mind is internal sense organ through which knowledge of the empirical ideas or *dharmas* happens). Thus altogether there are eight vijnanas. Here comes up all other *dharmas* that other schools of Buddhism speak of. This school speaks of 100 *dharmas*. These are the last bifurcation of *vijnana*.

iii) Doctrine of Three truths

Yogacara is not only idealism, but also absolutism, for; the logical culmination of idealism is absolutism. Idealism says object does not exist; only subject exists. But the question is – can the subject exist without object? If there is no object what will you call subject? For both of them relatively exist. When object is negated, then the next logical step will be the receding of subject. Thus we reach the *sunyata* of Madhyamaka. But as far as the relative existence of subject and object are concerned, that is real for all practical purposes, as long as our ignorance (*avidya*) does its work

of objectification and falsification. Unlike Madhyamaka who makes a twofold division of reality, Yogacara makes threefold. First is *Parikalpita*. That which has no authentic existence is *parikalpita*. It is totally imagined to exist (*kalpanamatra*). It is an object projected by the creative consciousness. Its existence is like barren woman's son. Second is *Paratantra*. This too is appearance, but it is caused by causes and conditions. That which causes it is eight types of consciousness. When the idea of the other goes, this appearance too will go, till then it will remain. Thus it is a mid-way between *Parikalpita* and *Parinispanna*. When this will go what remains is the third division of reality, known as *Parinispanna*. Thus it is the inner essence of all reality (*dharmanam dharmata*). We can speak of it only in the negative, as what it is not. Positively we can speak of it only as the consciousness freed from subject-object duality.

iv) Yogacara ideal and the way to attain it

The very name 'Yogacara' refers to 'practice of yoga'. Yogacara contains a systematised path of Buddhist practice. Buddhist goal is *nirvana*. This *nirvana* is understood in different ways in different schools. In Yogacara nirvana is freedom of consciousness from duality of the subject and the object which is the false idea or *avidya*. Though duality is *avidya*, the effect it generates is real and we need strict disciple and practice for removing the false idea. They speak of six *paramita* discipline. They are *Dana*, *Sila*, *Ksanti*, *Virya*, *Dhyana* and *Prajna*. Though the first ones are ethical practices, the final one is purely intellectual. It consists in the understanding of the real nature (*Prajna*). This is realization of *Tathata* (the essence of everything), the reality as it is.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What are the noble truths of Buddha? Explain.

…...
....
....
....
....
....

2. Elaborate the ways of cessation of suffering.

…...
....
....
....
....

3.10 LET US SUM UP

The main Hinayana Mahayana distinctions:

In Metaphysics: Hinayanists are radical pluralists but Mahayanists are radical absolutists. (non-dualistic advaya)

In Epistemology: Hinayanists are rationalists and realists. Mahayanists are mystical, super-rationalists who use dialectical criticism.

In Ethics: Hinayanists are egoistic individualistic aim at Arhathood. Mahayanists are Universal Salvationists aiming at enlightenment for the sake of others (bodhisattva, tathagata)

In religion: Hinayana becomes an order of Monks emphasising human aspect of Buddha. Mahayanists are more devotional, Buddha become object of worship on one side and on the other side the absolute metaphysical reality.

These general trends that we noted here in this general division influence one way or other the peculiarities of each of the school we examined above.

3.11 KEY WORDS

Dharma is a basic general term in Indian philosophy. Even in Buddhism it is used in four senses. 1) *Dharma* in the sense of one ultimate Reality (as it is used in the word *Dharma*-kaya). 2) *Dharma* in the sense of scripture, doctrine, religion (as it is used in the word Buddhist *Dharma*). 3) *Dharma* in the sense of righteousness, virtue (as it is used in general sense). 4) *Dharma* in the sense of "elements of existence". (in this sense it is generally used in plural)

Scholasticism is generally used in two senses: 1) philosophy in the service of religion (angilla philosophie), 2) excessive subtlety and artificiality in philosophical constructions. Scholasticism in Buddhism is to be taken in the second sense. Vaibhasikas were scholastic in this sense with 75 *dharmas*. The Sautrantikas were in favour of simplification thus they reduced the number of *dharmas* into 45.

Prajna Paramita refers to culmination of six spiritual qualities that help the practitioner for seeing the truth face to face (*vipasyana*). They are *dana* (charity), *sila* (withdrawing from all evil deeds), *ksanti* (forbearance), *virya* (enthusiasm), *dhyana* (concentration) and *prajna* (transcendental insight).

'***Avyakrtas***' (inexpressible) are the questions about which Buddha kept silence. They are traditionally enumerated as 14. They are

i) Whether the world is a) eternal, b) or non-eternal, c) or both eternal and non-eternal, d) or neither eternal nor non-eternal.

ii) Whether the world is a) finite, b) or infinite, c) or both, d) or neither

iii) Whether the Tathagata a) exists after death, b) or does not, c) or both d) or neither

iv) Whether the soul is identical with the body or different from it.

Idealism we understand here in an epistemological sense. Not in a metaphysical sense where we speak of reality as spiritual. According to A.K. Chaterjee, epistemologically this term connotes three things. a) Knowledge is creative, b) there is nothing given in knowledge, and c) the creative knowledge itself is real.

Soteriological means that which is concerned with salvation.

3.11 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Thomas, Edward J. *The History of Buddhist Thought.* New York: Dover Publications, 2002.

Frauwallner, Erich. *The Philosophy of Buddhism.* Delhi: Motilal Banarisdas Publishers, 2010.

Murti, T.R.V. *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism - A Study of Madhyamika System.* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2003

Stcherbatsky, Theodre. *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*. Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, n.d.

Chatterjee, A.K. *The Yogacara Idealism.* Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers, 1999.

UNIT 4 JAINISM

Contents

4.9. Further Readings and References

4.0. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to introduce students to the *Jaina* philosophical system in general. This chapter gives a small historical background of the school of Jainism with its development and different sects. It discusses the general characteristic features of Jainism and also examines its epistemology, metaphysics and ethics. Key notions like *syadvada, saptabhanginaya* and *anekantavada* are also analyzed in detail.

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The Jainas strongly believe in the teachings of the twenty four *Tirthankaras*. Rishabhadeva was the first *Tirthankara*. The last teacher or the *Tirthankara* was Vardhamana who was given the title Mahavira meaning 'the great hero'. He is believed to have lived in the sixth century B.C. during the time of Buddha. Vardhamana was preceded by Parsvanatha who lived in the ninth century B.C. The remaining 22 teachers or the *Tirthankaras* are believed to have belonged to a much earlier period. The word *Jaina* came from the root word *Jina* which etymologically means a conqueror. It is the common name given to all the twenty four *Tirthankaras* since they all had conquered passions and thereby attained liberation.

The *Jainas* did not believe in God. They are liberated souls who were once upon a time in bondage but later through their own efforts became free, perfect, omniscient, omnipotent and blissful. In due course of time the followers of Jainism got divided into two well known sects namely *Svetambaras* and the *Digambaras*. Their basic distinction lies in the minor details of faith and practice. While the *Svetambaras* are more accommodative and down to earth the *Digambaras* are more strict and orthodox. The *Digambaras* hold that the followers of their sect should renounce all attachments, possessions and even clothes for that matter. On the other hand the *Svetambaras* insist that their followers should wear only white clothes.

The philosophical outlook of Jainism is based on a common sense type of realism and pluralism. For them the objects in this world are many in number and are also real. The world consists of two kinds of substances namely *jiva* and *ajiva*. All living beings have a soul *(Jiva)*. They give extreme importance to the concept of *Ahimsa, Syadvada and Anekantavada*.

4.2. EPISTEMOLOGY OF JAINISM

Consciousness is the inseparable essence of every soul. It is like the sun's light capable of manifesting itself and also every other thing, unless it is obstructive. The reason is that omniscience is a natural property of the soul. In an unobstructed state, the soul is in a position to know things but when it is imprisoned in the body its nature of omniscience is obstructed. In other words it can know things only through the apparatus of the senses. The obstacles are created by the different *karmas* of the soul. These *karmas* obstruct the natural consciousness of the soul in different degrees and that determines the type of knowledge that the soul can get.

The Jainas admit twofold classification of knowledge – namely mediate and immediate knowledge. Under mediate knowledge they categorize inference and other such knowledge which are derived through the medium of some other knowledge. On the other hand immediate knowledge refers to perception. Perceptual knowledge is said to be immediate because we get knowledge of both external and internal objects through the senses and mind. In some cases the soul is also in a position to apprehend.

In other words immediate knowledge is direct and mediate knowledge is indirect. Under immediate knowledge we have again two kinds namely ordinary immediate knowledge, extraordinary immediate knowledge; ordinary immediate knowledge, is that type of knowledge which the soul gets when bound by the *karma* obstacles. Under this type of knowledge we can classify *mati jnana* and *sruta jnana*. *Mati Jnana* includes any kind of knowledge obtained through the senses and mind. It even includes memory, recognition etc. On the other hand *sruta jnana* involves knowledge derived from an authoritative person or text. One may argue that listening to a person or reading a text is also a part of perceptual knowledge. Even *sruta jnana* can be brought under mati jnana but the Jainas reply that *sruta jnana* is different from *mati jnana* because it involves the text of an authoritative person, that is why it needs special mention.

Immediate knowledge is also classified as absolute or *paramartika* immediate knowledge or extraordinary immediate knowledge. This knowledge is possible after the soul is purged of the impurities namely the karma obstacles. In such a state the soul's consciousness becomes immediately related to objects without the medium of the senses. In the case of ordinary immediate knowledge the soul is caged in the body and as a result, it can be related to objects and thereby know them only through the senses. In that stage the soul's knowledge is not only obtained through the sense organs but is also guided by the *karma* obstacles. On the other hand, the soul is said to obtain extraordinary knowledge directly. We can explain this with an example. When a person is standing inside a room he can know the outside world only through the openings in that room such as windows, and doorways. Once the four walls that surround him are removed he can know much more about the world than what he knew earlier. In other words, man is able to see everything around him provided he is free. Similarly soul's consciousness is capable of knowing everything directly but when it is inside the body it is limited, it is not in a position to exercise its full power. When ones *karma* obstacles are removed he is in the path towards extraordinary knowledge which of course is immediate par excellence. The Jainas talk about this in stages because this immediate extraordinary knowledge is not to be got overnight. It needs the gradual destruction of the *karma* obstacles. The Jainas mention three such stages as

(i) *Avadhi*

(ii) *Manah Paryaya*

(iii) *Kevala – Jnana*

After the partial destruction of karmas one acquires the power of knowing objects which are too for away and obscure for the normal sense organs. This stage of extraordinary knowledge is *avadhi*. The second stage is *manah paryaya* wherein one has direct access to others mind. This can happen only after that person overcomes hatred and jealousy. In other words, in the first stage, we are able to know some distant gross objects with a form. In the second stage we are able to know or probe deeper into subtle level. Finally when all karmas are destroyed completely, then absolute knowledge or omniscience arises. That stage is *kevala jnana*. Only the liberated souls possess this kind of extraordinary knowledge.

The Jainas accept three *pramanas* or sources of knowledge namely perception, inference, and testimony. Perceptual knowledge is direct which involves the sense organs and therefore acceptance of perception as an independent source of knowledge

need not be elaborated. But definitely we must examine the refutation of Carvaka's position by the Jainas regarding inference and testimony. The Jainas ask whether perception is a valid source of knowledge. efinitely according to Carvaka, perception is a valid source of knowledge because it is uncontradicted and at the same time not misleading. Now the Jainas point out that the reasons for the validity of perception itself shows that the Carvaka resorts to inferential knowledge. Furthermore even perceptual knowledge can at times be contradicted and misleading as in the case of the perception of a mirage. So the Jainas point out that if perception can be contradicted and misleading but still held as a source of knowledge why not inference and testimony be regarded as independent sources of knowledge.

Therefore according to Jainism the only reasonable conclusion that we can draw is that any source of knowledge, be it perception, inference or testimony, should be regarded as valid in so far as it yields knowledge that does not prove misleading. Therefore the criterion of validity should be the harmony of knowledge with the practical consequences to which that knowledge leads.

4.3. THE JAINA THEORY OF JUDGMENT OR *SYADVADA*

It is the conception of reality as extremely indeterminate which is the basis of *syadvada.* According to this theory every judgment is only partial or relative. The term "*syat"* is derived from the Sanskrit root "*as*" which means "to be". The present tense form of this verb '*as'* is '*asti'* which can be translated as "is". The potential mood of this verb form is *"syat*" which means "may be". The Jainas use this theory to signify that the universe can be looked at from many points of view and that each view yields a different conclusion. In other words they believe that there can be a variety of doctrines depending upon the points of view. This is known as *anekantavada.* This doctrine indicates an extreme caution and signifies an anxiety to avoid absolute affirmation and absolute negation. Here one must see the conditions under which this doctrine was passed in order to understand its significance. There were two important extreme views concerning reality. At one point of time namely the *Upanishadic* view and at another point the Buddhistic view. The *Upanishadic* view of reality upholds the concept of "Being". On the contrary the Buddhists deny such a "Being". According to Jainism both these theories are only partially true. So the Jainas consider reality to be so complex that every one of these theories is true as far as it goes. But none is absolutely true. So the Jainas make out a series of partially true statements without committing to any of these exclusively. This series is explained in seven steps or sevenfold formula called *saptabhanginaya.* "*Naya"* means partial knowledge about some object while "*bhangi"* means different and "*sapta*" seven.

Judgment based on any partial knowledge is also called *naya.* When we consider every judgment to be unconditionally true then it leads on to quarrel. In this way the various schools of philosophy have come to quarrel with each other since they believe that their judgment of reality is final; when they realize that their knowledge is partial the conflict is no longer there. In view of this fact the Jainas insist that every judgment should be qualified by some words like "somehow" or "may be" so that the limitation of every judgment as also the possibility of other judgments is recognized. Thus *syadvada* is the theory which holds that every judgment is only partially true. Thus we have the judgment "the elephant is like a pillar" is changed into "may be or somehow the elephant is like a pillar". On the basis of this theory the Jainas classify seven kinds

of judgments though logic recognizes only two namely affirmative and negative. The seven types of judgments are as follows:

a) *syat asti* – 'somehow S is P'. A jar is red

b) *syat nasti* – ' somehow S may not be P'. A jar may not be red.

c) *syat avaktavyam* – 'somehow S may be indescribable'. The redness of jar cannot be described adequately.

d) *syat asti ca nasti ca* – 'somehow S may be or may not be P'. This argument does not involve contradiction. Normally logic considers a judgment to be contradictory only when it holds that 'S' is both 'P' and 'not P', because the same 'S' is 'P' from one angle and 'not P' from another angle. That is why this judgment is accepted by the Jainas.

e) *syat asti ca avaktavyam ca* – somehow 'S' is 'P' and is indescribable.

f) *syat nasti ca avaktavyan ca*- somehow 'S' is 'not P' and is indescribable.

g) *syat asti ca nasti ca avaktavyam ca*- somehow 'S' is 'P' 'not P' and indescribable. These seven steps form a part of what is known as *saptabhanginaya* or the seven fold judgments. According to this theory every judgment is only partial or relative.

4.4. THE JAINA METAPHYSICS OR THE THEORY OF SUBSTANCE

Every substance has got innumerable characters of which some are positive and others are negative. As in common conversation so also in philosophy a distinction is made between the characters and that which possesses these characters. We call that which possesses characters as substance or *dravya*. The world consists of different substances. Each of these substances have qualities which are essential along with qualities that are accidental. The essential quality is called *guna*. The accidental quality is called *paryaya.* The essential qualities are those that remain in the substance as long as the substance exists. In other words they are inseparable from the substance. On the other hand the accidental qualities are those which come and go. In so for as the essential characters of the ultimate substance are abiding, the world is permanent. In so far as the accidental qualities undergo modifications, the substance also changes. According to Jainas both change and permanence are real. When we apply *syadvada* the seeming contradiction between change and permanence vanishes. The Jainas reject both *kshanikavada* (theory of momentariness of Buddhists) and reject *nityavada* (theory of permanence of the vedantins).

Substances can be classified as both extended and non-extended. Among substances time alone is devoid of extension. All other substances are considered to be extended. Extended substances are innumerable and are referred to by the general name *astikaya* because every substance exists like a body. *Kaya* means that which possesses extension. The word *astikaya* means anything that occupies space or has some pervasiveness. Such objects which are extended are classified by the Jainas as animate (*jiva)* and inanimate (*ajiva).* We may call them as the living being or the non-living matter. The Jainas consider soul or *jiva* as an extended substance. This is not without reason. Normally we understand soul as being opposed to body; since body is extended we conclude that its opposite namely the soul is non-extended. But according to Jainism souls also expand and contract according to the dimensions of the body which they occupy. It is only in this sense that the Jainas regard souls to be

extended. Even among such souls the Jainas differentiate between the emancipated and fettered souls. Once the souls are emancipated or liberated none of the impurities attach to them. That is the highest state of *jiva*. But the *jiva* has to transcend various levels before reaching this state. So the Jainas attribute such states to the souls in bondage. Fettered souls are either moving or immobile.

Among the non-moving fettered souls the Jainas consider those living in bodies made of earth, water, fire, and air or plants. All such non-moving substances (*sthavara*) have one-sensed, namely that of touch. On the contrary moving substances (*trasa*) are two-sensed namely worms, three-sensed like ants, four-sensed like bees and five sensed like man. This distinction among moving substances is based on the senses that are active. For instance in the case of worms the sense of touch and taste alone are at work. In the case of ants the senses of touch, taste and smell. That is why ants have been classified under three-sensed and similarly bees are four-sensed because they also have sight. The immobile living substances have the most imperfect kind of bodies when compared to the mobile living substances. The Jainas regard even the four elements as being animated by souls, that is the particles of earth etc have soul in the sense that there is consciousness present in them although this consciousness is not as differentiated as in the case of a higher being. We may call such substances as elementary. They just live and die. Their functions are not clearly demarcated, or well defined. These elementary lives are either gross or subtle. Gross objects are distinguished from subtle on the basis of their visibility and knowability. On the contrary the mobile living substances have bodies of different degrees of perfection.

Soul or *jiva* – Generally *jiva* is a conscious substance. It is also extendable in space because souls expand and contract according to the dimensions of the body. According to the Jainas the essence of soul is consciousness or in other words consciousness is present in the soul everywhere. The Jainas arrange the soul theoretically in a continuous series according to the degree of consciousness. At the highest end of the scale would be the perfect soul that has overcome all *karmas* and attained omniscience and at the lowest end would be the most imperfect soul such as the single sensed souls. In this state consciousness is in the dormant form due to the interference of *karma* obstacles.

The soul knows, performs, enjoys, suffers and illumines itself and other objects. Like a light it has no form of itself but it takes the form of the body. It is in this sense that the soul is said to occupy space in its pure states, the soul as infinite bliss and infinite power. Except a few souls all other souls are in bondage because of *karma* or matter which has been accumulated in the past. The Jainas view that consciousness or soul has extension and the soul primarily is a living being which has consciousness in every part of the living body. Consciousness is the essential quality of the soul.

Proofs for the existence of Soul :

1. The existence of the soul is directly perceived by experiences such as “I feel pleasure, pain” etc., when a quality is perceived we say that along with it a substance is also perceived.
2. We can also prove the existence of the soul from inference. If we take a body as an instrument there must be someone to control it and that which controls the body is the soul.
3. The body also performs many actions that are guided; this enables us to infer the existence of soul as the guiding factor.

4.5. INANIMATE SUBSTANCE (OR) *AJIVA*

Among the extended substances we have seen *jiva* and its various facts. Now let us take a look into another category of extendable substance namely the inanimate substance or *ajiva*. Even these substances occupy space and is referred to as *astikaya* . The Jainas classify this kind of substance into four namely, *Pudgalastikaya, Akasastikaya, Dharmastikaya, Adharmastikaya*

Pudgalastikaya

The word "*pudgala"* means matter and since it occupies space it is *astikaya*. Etymologically it means that which is liable to integration and disintegration. Material substances combine together to form larger wholes and can also break up into smaller and smaller parts. The smallest part of matter which cannot be further divided is called an atom (*Anu*). *Pudgala* is made up of such atoms. The Jainas call atoms and combination of atoms by this single term *pudgala*. All material substances are produced by the combination of atoms. Our bodies and objects of nature are such compounds of material atoms. So even they are called as *pudgala.* Even mind, speech and breath are products of matter. The atoms are eternal and possess qualities like touch, taste smell and colour. Therefore we find these qualities in the compounds of atoms. Here according to Jainas, sound is not an original quality. It is an accidental modification of matter.

Dharmastikaya* and *Adharmastikaya

The terms *dharma* and *adharma* should not mislead us into thinking about merits and demerits. Instead these two terms are used to denote two kinds of inanimate substances which are known and proved inferentially. They stand for mobility and immobility. The Jainas argue that the movement of a fish in the water, though initiated by the fish, would not be possible without the medium of water. Here water is a necessary condition. Similarly the movement of any soul or material thing needs a necessary condition without which movement would not be possible. Such a condition is *dharma*. Nevertheless, dharma cannot cause movement in a non-moving object. It only favours the movement of objects in motion. On the other hand *adharma* is the substance that helps in the immobility of objects or the restful state of objects, just as the shade of a tree helps the traveler to take rest. However *adharma* cannot arrest the movement of any moving object. These two are pervasive in nature. In other words these two are passive conditions for movement and the state of rest respectively. Water cannot compel a fish to move nor can the shade compel a person to take rest. Similarly dharma and *adharma* do not compel movement and immobility actively but help objects to move or not to move passively. The necessity for admitting these two categories seems probably to have been felt by the Jainas on account of their notion that the inner activity of jiva or the atoms, require for its exterior realization the help of some other entity. Moreover since the *jivas* were regarded as having inherent activity they would be found to be moving even at the time of liberation which is undesirable.

***Akastikaya* or Space**

The function of *akasa* is to afford room for the existence of all extended substances. It is based on this category that the Jainas classify substances as astikaya. Soul, matter, *dharma* and *adharma* exist in space. The existence of space is inferred and not

perceived because substances which are extended can have extension only in space, and that space is called *akasa.* Here *akasa* is a necessary condition. Likewise, if we say that substances are those that pervade, then there must be something that is pervaded. That which pervades is called substance while that which is pervaded is space. Jainas distinguish two kinds of space namely *lokakasa* and *alokakasa. Lokakasa* stands for space containing the world and *alokakasa* stands for empty space that exists beyond *lokakasa.*

Time or *Kala*

It is the only non-extendable substance according to the Jainas. Time makes possible continuity modifications etc. Like space time is also inferred. It is inferred as the condition without which we cannot speak about continued existence of things or modification of things. For instance mango became ripe implies that mango was in an unripe state at one point of time which became ripe at a later time. But time according to Jainas is non-extendable(*anastikaya*) because time is an indivisible substance. It cannot be characterized by space. It is irreversable. The Jainas distinguish between real time (i.e) *paramartika kala* and empirical time *vyavaharika kala.* Continuity or duration is the measure of real time. But on the other hand, changes of all kinds characterize empirical time. According to the Jainas empirical time is conventional i.e. divided into hours, minutes and seconds. It is limited by a beginning and an end. Real time on the other hand, is eternal and formless.

Check your Progress-I

1.What is meant by *dravya*, *guna* and *paryaya*?

……………………………………………….

……………………………………………….

2. .Write short notes on *jiva*.

……………………………………………….

……………………………………………….

4.6. JAINA ETHICS

This is the most important aspect of the Jaina philosophy. For them metaphysics or epistemology is useful only in so far as it helps man to right conduct. What is meant by right conduct? According to the Jainas right conduct enables man to liberate himself from bondage. Bondage in Indian philosophy means the liability of the individual to birth and all consequent sufferings. But the suffering individual is a conscious substance (*jiva)* who possesses infinite perception, infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite bliss. Despite these perceptions the soul suffers in birth because of *karma* obstacles. If the soul has to regain its inherent qualities then these obstacles must be removed. This situation is like that of the sun's light which becomes brighter and brighter as soon as the clouds are cleared. In order to know how these obstacles can be cleared let us analyze what these obstacles are in reality. The Jainas assert that the obstacles are constituted by matter particles which infect the soul and overpower its natural qualities. In other words we can say that body which is made up of matter particles *(pudgala*) is responsible for limiting the soul. Each body is made up of a particular combination of matter particles which depend on the soul's

passion. The *karma* or the sum of past life of the soul generates a craving which attracts particular *pudgala* to the soul. The soul becomes the efficient cause and *pudgala* becomes the material cause. It is our past *karmas* that determine the family in which we are born as well as the nature of our body such as its colour, shape, longevity, the number and nature of sense organs etc. For instance *gotra–karma* determines the family into which the soul is to be born and *ayush - karma* determines the length of life.

Liberation

Bondage, we have seen is the association of soul with matter and liberation therefore should be the complete dissociation of the two. This can be achieved by stopping the influx of new matter into the soul as well as by complete elimination of the old matter with which the soul has become already mingled. Passions of the soul lead to association. What is the cause of this passion? Passions spring from our ignorance about the real nature of our soul. It is knowledge that alone can remove ignorance. Therefore the Jainas stress the need for right knowledge of reality (*samyag – jnana*). Right knowledge is the detailed cognition of the real nature of ego and non-ego, which is free from doubt, error uncertainty etc. It can be obtained only by studying carefully the teachings of the omniscient *Tirthankaras* or teachers who have already obtained liberation and therefore are fit to lead others out of bondage. When do we accept a knowledge? Only when we have a preliminary belief in that. Then that preliminary faith should be supported by right knowledge again for having right faith based on general acquaintance (*samyag- darsana*) in support of right knowledge. Right faith does not imply that one must blindly follow the *Tirthankaras*. But one must have the right attitude of respect towards truth. Further by studying the teachings of the *Tirthankaras* one can strengthen his belief. But these two are rendered useless unless they are followed by rigorous practice. Right conduct is the third indispensable (*samyag-caritra*) condition of liberation. It is this that enables one to stop the influx of new karmas and also to eradicate old ones. It consists in the control of passions, senses, thought, speech etc. Right conduct is therefore described as refraining from what is harmful and doing what is good. The Jaina prescription for right conduct: One must follow the five great vows namely the *panca-maha-vrata* for the perfection of right conduct. They are *Ahimsa, Sathyam, Asteyam, Brahamacaryam and Aparigraha.*

Ahimsa

It denotes abstinence from all injuries to life – either *trasa* or *sthavara.* That is why a Jaina *muni* breathes through a piece of cloth in order not to inhale or destroy any life in the air. It must be followed in thought, word and deed. That is why they practice extreme caution in speaking, walking or even in answering calls of nature so as to avoid injury to any life whatsoever. *Sathyam*: It is abstinence from falsehood. It is speaking what is true, good and pleasant. Otherwise truthfulness is of no use. To maintain this vow one must conquer greed, fear and anger. *Asteyam*: It refers to abstinence from stealing. Human life requires some form of wealth for their survival. Depriving another man of his wealth is morally wrong. By stealing his belongings it deprives him of an essential condition of life. *Brahmacaryam*: This pertains to abstinence from sensual and casual pleasures. One must refrain himself from *karma* of any form altogether either in speech, talk or action. *Aparigraha*: This means abstinence from all kinds of attachments. It lies in giving up attachment for the objects of five senses.

Right faith, knowledge and conduct are inseparably bound up with one another and the progress and degeneration of the one affects the other two. A person must harmoniously develop all these three together. Only when the soul overcomes passions and *karmas* (both old and new) it becomes completely free from bondage to all forms of matter and reaches its inherent potentiality. It is finally here that the soul attains the fourfold path of perfection (*Ananta catustaya*) as follows: *Ananta Jnana* (infinite knowledge), *Ananta darsana* (infinite faith), *Ananta virya* (infinite power), *Ananta sukha* (infinite bliss). These three (right knowledge, right faith and right conduct) are known as *Triratnas* – or the three gems of Jainism.

Check Your Progress-II

1.What is the cause of bondage according to Jainism?

----

2. Discuss the Jaina concept of liberation.

4.7. LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to give a detailed historical account of Jainism and an analysis into the various concepts of the Philosophy of the Jainism. We have discussed at first the Jaina epistemology. We have also analysed key concepts like *Syadvada, Anekantavada, Saptabhanginaya*, under the different kinds of judgments and finally have evaluated the concept and importance of *Ahimsa* along with the role of *Pancamahavrata*, in attaining liberation.

4.8. KEY WORDS

Tirthankaras :	One who has conquered all passions, *raga* and *dvesa.*
Consciousness :	The inseparable essence of every soul.
Syadvada:	The theory that every judgment is relative.
Suptabhanginaya:	Seven different forms of judgment relating to nature of reality.
Substance:	One which possesses of some essential characters (*gunas*) and also changing modes (*paryaya*)
Astikaya:	Substances having extension.
Anastikaya:	Substances devoid of any extension.
Ahimsa:	Non-violence or non-injury to any living beings.
Anekantavada:	The metaphysical theory of reality as many–faced.
Jiva :	Soul
Ajiva:	Matter

Triratna: Right faith, Right knowledge and Right conduct (Three gems of Jainism.

4.9. FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Hiriyanna M., *Outlines of Indian Philosophy.* Delhi*:* Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi. 1993.

Radhakrishnan S., *Indian Philosophy*. New Delhi: George Allen & Unwin publication, 1983.

Satischandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy.* Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1984.

Indira Gandhi National Open University
School of Interdisciplinary and
Trans-disciplinary Studies

MPY – 001

Indian Philosophy

Block 3

ORTHODOX SYSTEMS -1

UNIT 1
Nyaya-Vaiseshika

UNIT 2
Samkhya

UNIT 3
Yoga

UNIT 4
Mimamsa

Expert Committee

Prof. Gracious Thomas
Director, School of Social Work
IGNOU

Prof. Renu Bharadwaj
School of Humanities
IGNOU

Prof. George Panthanmackel,
Senior Consultant,
IGNOU

Dr. M. R. Nandan
Govt. College for Women
Mandya - Mysore

Dr. Kuruvila Pandikattu
Jnana-deepa Vidyapeeth
Ramwadi,
Pune

Dr Babu Joseph
CBCI Centre
New Delhi

Prof. Tasadduq Husain
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

Dr. Bhuvaneswari
Lavanya Flats
Gangai Amman Koil St.
Thiruvanmiyur
Chennai – 600 041

Dr. Alok Nag
Vishwa Jyoti Gurukul
Varanasi

Dr. Jose Kuruvachira
Salesian College &
IGNOU Study Centre
Dimapur, Nagaland

Dr. Sathya Sundar
Sethy
Dept of Humanities
IIT, Chennai.

Dr. Joseph Martis
St. Joseph's College
Jeppu, Mangalore – 2

Dr. Jaswinder Kaur
Dhillon
147, Kabir park
Opp. GND University
Amristar – 143 002

Prof. Y.S. Gowramma
Principal,
College of Fine Arts,
Manasagangotri
Mysore – 570 001

Block Preparation

Units 1 & 2	Dr. Chinnaiah Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.
Unit 3	Dr. Shyamala Payannur, Kannur, Kerala.
Unit 4	Dr. Chandrasekar Vivekananda College, Chennai.

Content Editor
Dr. V. John Peter
IGNOU, New Delhi

Format Editor
Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

Programme Coordinator
Prof. Gracious Thomas

IGNOU, New Delhi.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Indian logic, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and philosophy of language are developed and discussed in Nyaya-Vaisesika, Samkhya-Yoga and Mimamsa systems. Nyaya develops logic and epistemology with its theory of knowledge and of causation; Vaisesika develops metaphysics and ontology with categories. Samkhya upholds dualistic realism of *Purusa* and *Prakrti,* with its famous theory of evolution of the world. Yoga system substantiates Samkhya with its ethical path towards cessation of the modification of mind. Mimamsa is famous for its interpretative theories leading to philosophy of language.

Unit 1 tries to give central concepts of Nyaya and Vaisesika. Nyaya is a system of logical realism and atomistic pluralism. Nyaya develops logic and epistemology; Vaisesika develops metaphysics and ontology. First part of the unit explains Nyaya theory of knowledge, causation, physical world, God and the proofs for the existence of God. In the second part of this unit relating to the orthodox system of Vaisesika, we have discussed Vaisesika categories, atoms, creation, destruction, bondage and liberation.

In the **Unit 2** we have clear ideas about the central concepts of Samkhya. The Samkhya metaphysics speaks of two principle categories of *prakrti* and *purusa.* Their combination is manifested as the whole world. Samkhya believes in *satkaryavada,* and *parinamavada* the basic theory of causation that explains transformation of what is in the cause into the effect. Samkhya theory of liberation is just the absolute and complete cessation of all pain without a possibility of return, as *purusa* realizes itself dissociated with the *prakrti.*

Unit 3 on Yoga system gives a description of Yoga as a philosophy associated with the school of Samkhya as the practical method for achieving the understanding of the self. An attempt is made to give the meaning of Yoga as defined as the cessation of the modification of *chitta.* It also covers *chitta* and its *vrittis*. Again, Yoga also advocates control over the body, the senses and the mind, through eight stages called as *ashtanga yoga*. A brief note on the theism in Yoga is also dealt.

Unit 4 on Mimamsa school of Indian Philosophy known for its theory of interpretation highlights the contribution of Mimamsa to Indian philosophy. Mimamsa interpretative tradition can be considered to be the first in India to have embarked on interpreting the Vedas as gems of hermeneutic analysis. The Unit describes the some of the basic features of both Kumarila Bhatta and Prabhakara schools of Mimamsa in interpreting the Vedas, theory of validity of knowledge, theory of error, theory of reality (realism) and theory of God.

UNIT 1 NYAYA – VAISESIKA

Contents

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, the student should be able to:

- Understand the orthodox systems of the Nyaya and Vaisesika.
- Elucidate the Nyaya theory of knowledge.
- Discuss the Nyaya theory of causation.
- Recognize Nyaya conception of God and proofs for the existence of God.
- Be aware of the categories of Vaisesika.
- Appreciate the Vaisesika theory of Atomism.
- Comprehend the Vaisesika concept of Bondage and Liberation.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Nyaya is the work of the great philosopher and sage Gautama. It is a realistic philosophy based mainly on logical grounds. It admits four separate sources of true knowledge. Perception (*pratyaksa*), inference (*anumana*), comparison (*upamana*) and testimony (*sabda*) are the sources of true knowledge. Perception is the direct knowledge of objects produced by their relation to our senses. Inference is the knowledge of objects not through perception but through the apprehension of some mark. Comparison is the knowledge of the relation between a name and things so named on the basis of a given description of their similarity to some familiar object.

Testimony is the knowledge about anything derived from the statements of authoritative persons.

The objects of knowledge, according to the Nyaya, are the self, the body, the senses and their objects, cognition (*buddhi*), mind (*manas*), activity (*pravritti*), mental defects (*dosa*) rebirth (*pretyabhava*), the feeling of pleasure and pain (*phala*), suffering (*dukkha*), and freedom from suffering (*apavarga*). The Nyaya seeks to deliver the self from its bondage to the body, the senses and their objects. It says that the self is distinct from the body and the mind. The body is only a composite substance made of matter. The mind is a subtle, indivisible and eternal substance. It serves the soul as an instrument for the perception of psychic qualities like pleasure, pain, etc; it is, therefore, called an internal sense. The self (*atman*) is another substance which is quite distinct from the mind and the body. Liberation (*apavarga*) means the absolute cessation of all pain and suffering brought about by the right knowledge of reality (*tattva jnana*). Liberation is only release from pain. The existence of God is proved by the Nyaya by several arguments. God is the ultimate cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world. Nyaya did not create the world out of nothing, but out of eternal atoms, space, time, ether, minds and souls.

The Vaisesika system was founded by the philosopher and the sage Kanada. The Vaisesika is allied to the Nyaya system and has the same end view, namely, the liberation of the individual self. It brings all objects of knowledge, the whole world, under the seven categories of substance (*dravya*), quality (*guna*), action (*karma*), generality (*samanya*), particularity (*visesa*), the relation of inherence (*samavaya*), and non-existence (*abhava*). A substance is the substratum of qualities and activities, but is different from both. A quality is that which exists in a substance and has itself no quality or activity. An action is a movement. Particularity is the ground of the ultimate differences of things. Inherence is the permanent or eternal relation by which a whole is in its parts; a quality or an action is in a substance; the universal is in the particulars. Non-existence stands for all negative facts. With regard to God and liberation of the individual soul the Vaisesika theory is substantially the same as that of the Nyaya.

1.2 NYAYA AND VAISESIKA

Nyaya is a system of atomic pluralism and logical realism. It is allied to the Vaisesika system which is regarded as ‘*Samanatantra* or similar philosophy. Vaisesika develops metaphysics and ontology. Nyaya develops logic and epistemology. Both agree in viewing the earthly life as full of suffering, as bondage of the soul; liberation is absolute cessation of suffering as the supreme end of life. Both agree that bondage is due to ignorance of reality and that liberation is due to right knowledge of reality. Vaisesika takes up the exposition of reality and Nyaya mostly accepts the Vaisesika metaphysics. But there are some important points of difference between them which may be noted. Firstly, while the Vaisesika recognizes seven categories and classifies all real under them, the Nyaya recognizes sixteen categories and includes all the seven categories of the Vaisesikas in one of them called *prameya* or the knowable, the second in the sixteen. The first category is *pramana* or the valid means of knowledge. This clearly brings out the predominantly logical and epistemological character of the Nyaya system. Secondly, while the Vaisesika recognizes only two *pramanas,* perception and inference and reduces comparison and verbal authority to inference, the Nyaya recognizes all the four as separate – perception, inference, comparison and verbal authority.

1.3 NYAYA THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge or Cognition is defined as apprehension or consciousness. Nyaya believes that knowledge reveals both the subject and the object; they are quite distinct from knowledge. All knowledge is a revelation or manifestation of objects. Just as a lamp manifests physical things placed before it, so knowledge reveals all objects which come before it. Knowledge may be valid or invalid. Valid knowledge is defined as the right apprehension of an object. It is the manifestation of an object as it is. Nyaya maintains the theory of correspondence (*paratah pramanya*). Knowledge in order to be valid, must correspond to reality. Valid knowledge is produced by the four valid means of knowledge-perception, inference, comparison and testimony. Invalid knowledge includes memory (*smrti*), doubt (*samshaya*), error (*viparyaya*) and hypothetical reasoning (*tarka*). Memory is not valid because it is not present cognition but a represented one. The object remembered is not directly presented to the soul, but only indirectly recalled. Doubt is uncertainty in cognition. Error is misapprehension as it does not correspond to the real object. Hypothetical reasoning is no real knowledge.

Perception, inference, comparison or analogy and verbal testimony are the four kinds of valid knowledge. Let us consider them one by one. Sage Gotama defines perception as non-erroneous cognition which is produced by the intercourse of the sense-organs with the objects; it is not associated with a name and which is well-defined. Inference is defines as that cognition which presupposes some other cognition. Inference is mediate and indirect. Comparison defined as the knowledge of the relation between a word and its denotation. It is produce by the knowledge of resemblance or similarity. Verbal testimony is defined as the statement of a trustworthy person and consists in understanding its meaning.

1.4 NYAYA THEORY OF CAUSATION

Let us now consider the Nyaya theory of Causation. A cause is defined as an unconditional and invariable antecedent of an effect. The same cause produces the same effect and the same effect is produced by the same cause. Plurality of cause is ruled out. The first essential characteristic of a cause is its antecedence; the fact that it should precede the effect. The second is its invariability; it must invariably precede the effect. The third is its unconditionality or necessity; it must unconditionally precede the effect. Nyaya recognizes five kinds of accidental antecedents which are not real causes. Firstly, the qualities of a cause are mere accidental antecedents. The color of a potter’s staff is not the cause of a pot. Secondly, the cause of a cause or a remote cause is not unconditional. The potter’s father is not the cause of a pot. Thirdly, the co-effects of a cause are themselves not causally related. The sound produced by the potter’s staff is not the cause of a pot, though it may invariably precede the pot. Night and day are not causally related. Fourthly, eternal substances like space are not unconditional antecedents. Fifthly, unnecessary things like the potter’s ass are not unconditional antecedents; though the potter’s ass may be invariably present when the potter is making a pot, yet it is not the cause of the pot. A cause must be an unconditional and necessary antecedent. Nyaya emphasizes the sequence view of causality. Cause and effect are never simultaneous. Plurality of causes is also wrong because causal relation is reciprocal. The same effect cannot be produced by another cause. Each effect has its distinctive features and has only one specific cause. An effect is defined as the counter-entity of its own prior non-existence. It is the negation of its own prior negation. It comes into being and destroys

its prior non-existence. It was non-existent before its production. It did not pre-exist in its cause. It is a fresh beginning, a new creation.

1.5 NYAYA THEORY OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Now we come to the topic of the objects of knowledge. The physical world is constituted by the four physical substances of earth, water, fire and air. The ultimate constituents of these four substances are the eternal and unchanging atoms of earth, water, fire and air. *Akasa* or ether, *kala* or time, and *dik* or space is eternal and infinite substances, each being one single whole. Thus the physical world is the product of the four kinds of atoms of earth, water, fire and air. It contains all the composite products of these atoms, and their qualities and relations, including organic bodies, the senses, and the sensible qualities of things. According to Gautama the objects of knowledge are the self, the body, the senses and their objects, knowledge, mind, activity, the mental imperfections, rebirth, the feelings of pleasure and pain, suffering, absolute freedom from all suffering. All of these knowable are not to be found in the physical world, because it includes only those objects that either physical or somehow belong to the world of physical nature. Thus the self, its attribute of knowledge and *manas* are not at all physical. Time and space are two substances which although different from the physical substances, yet somehow belong to the physical world. *Akasa* is a physical substance which is not a productive cause of anything.

1.6 NYAYA CONCEPT OF GOD

God is the ultimate cause of creation, maintenance and destruction of the world. God is the eternal infinite self who creates, maintains and destroys the world. He does not create the world out of nothing, but out of eternal atoms, space, time, ether, minds and souls. The creation of the world means the ordering of the eternal entities, which are co-existent with God, into a moral world, in which individual selves enjoy and suffer according to the merit and demerit of their actions, and all physical objects serve as means to the moral and spiritual ends of our life. God is thus the creator of the world in the sense of being the first efficient cause of the world and not its material cause. He is also the preserver of the world in so far as the world is kept in existence by the will of God. So also He is the destroyer who lets loose the forces of destruction when the exigencies of the moral world require it. Then, God is one, infinite and eternal, since the world of space and time, minds and souls does not limit him, but is related to Him as a body to the self which resides in it. He is omnipotent, although He is guided in His activities by moral considerations of the merit and demerit of human actions. He is omniscient in so far as He possesses right knowledge of all things and events. He has eternal consciousness as a power of direct and steadfast cognition of all objects. Eternal consciousness is only an inseparable attribute of God, not His very essence, as maintained in the Advaita Vedanta. He possesses to the full all the six perfections and is majestic, almighty, all glorious, infinitely beautiful and possessed of infinite knowledge and perfect freedom from attachment.

Just as God is the efficient cause of the world, so He is the directive cause of the actions of all living beings. Nyaya gives the following arguments to prove the existence of God:

1. The world is an effect and hence it must have an efficient cause. This intelligent agent is God. The order, design, co-ordination between different phenomena comes from God.
2. The atoms being essentially inactive cannot form the different combinations unless God gives motion to them. The Unseen Power, the Adrsta, requires the intelligence of God. Without God it cannot supply motion to the atoms.
3. The world is sustained by God's will. Unintelligent Adrsta cannot do this. And the world is destroyed by God's will.
4. A word has a meaning and signifies an object. The power of words to signify their objects comes from God.
5. God is the author of the infallible Veda.
6. The Veda testifies to the existence of God.
7. The Vedic sentences deal with moral injunctions and prohibitions. The Vedic commands are the Divine commands. God is the creator and promulgator of the moral laws.
8. According to Nyaya the magnitude of a dyad is not produced by the infinitesimal magnitude of the two atoms each, but by the number of the two atoms. Number 'one' is directly perceived, but other numbers are conceptual creations. Numerical conception is related to the mind of the perceiver. At the time of creation, the souls are unconscious. And the atoms and the unseen Power and space, time, mind are all unconscious. Hence the numerical conception depends upon the Divine Consciousness. So God must exist.
9. We reap the fruits of our own actions. Merit and demerit accrue from our actions and the stock of merit and demerit is called *Adrsta*, the unseen power. But this Unseen Power, being unintelligent, needs the guidance of a supremely intelligent God.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) How many sources of knowledge are accepted by Nyaya? Explain.

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

2) Explain *asatkarya vada* of Nyaya.

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

3. State the arguments of Nyaya for proving the existence of God.

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

1.7 VAISESIKA CONCEPT OF *PADARTHA* OR CATEGORY

The Vaisesika system is regarded as conducive to the study of all systems. Its main purpose is to deal with the categories and to unfold its atomistic pluralism. A category is called *padartha* and the entire universe is reduced to six or seven *padarthas*. *Padartha* literally means the meaning of a word or the object signified by a word. All objects of knowledge or all reals come under *padartha*. *Padartha* means an object which can be thought and named.

Originally the Vaisesika believed in the six categories and the seventh, that of *abhava* or negation was added later on. Though Kanada himself speaks of *abhava*, yet he does not give it the status of a category to which it was raised only by the later *Vaisesikas*. The Vaisesika divides all existent reals which are all objects of knowledge into two classes; *bhava* or being and *abhava* or non-being. Six categories come under *bhava* and the seventh is *abhava*. All knowledge necessarily points to an object of knowledge and is called a *padartha*. The seven *padarthas* are: 1 substance (*dravya*), 2 quality (*guna*), 3 Activity (*karma*), 4 generality (*samanya*), 5 particularity (*visesa*), 6 inherence (*samavaya*), and 7. non-being (*abhava*).

1. *Dravya* Or Substance

Dravya or substance is defined as the substratum where actions and qualities in here and which is the coexistent material cause of the composite things produce from it. Substance signifies the self-subsistence, the absolute and independent nature of things. The category of substance is the substratum of qualities and actions. The *dravya*s are nine and include material as well as spiritual substances. The Vaisesika philosophy is pluralistic and realistic but not materialistic since it admits spiritual substances. The nine substances are: 1) earth (*prthivi*), 2) Water (*Ap*), 3) Fire (*tejas*), 4) Air (*vayu*), 5) ether (*akasa*), 6) time (*kala*), 7) space (*dik*), 8) spirit (*atman*) and 9) mind (*manas*). Earth, water, fire and air really signify not compound transient objects made out of them, but the ultimate elements, the supersensible eternal part less unique atoms which are individual and infinitesimal. Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the five gross elements. These and *manas* are physical. Soul is spiritual. Time and space are objective and not subjective forms of experience. Ether, space, time and soul are all-pervading and eternal. Atoms, minds and souls are infinite in number. Ether, space and time are one each.

2. *Guna* or Quality

The second category is *guna* or quality. Unlike substance, it cannot exist independently by itself and possesses no quality or action. It inheres in a substance and depends for its existence on the substance and is not a constitutive cause of anything. It is called an independent reality because it can be conceived, thought and named independent of a substance where it inheres. The qualities are therefore called objective entities. They are not necessarily eternal. They include both material and mental qualities. They are a static and permanent feature of a substance, whole action of a dynamic and transient feature of a substance. A quality, therefore, is different from both substance and action. Qualities include material and spiritual properties.

Smell is the quality of earth; taste of water; color of fire; touch of air; and sound of ether. Cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volition are the mental qualities which inhere in the self.

3. *Karma* or Action

The third category is *karma* or action. Like quality, it belongs to and inheres in a substance and cannot exist separately from it. But while a quality is a static and permanent feature of a substance, an action is a dynamic and transient feature of it. Unlike a quality, an action is the cause of conjunction and disjunction. Action is said to be of five kinds:1) upward movement, 2) downward movement, 3) contraction, 4) expansion, and 5) locomotion.

4. *Samanya* or Generality

The fourth category is *samanya* or generality. *Samanya* is generality. Generality is class-concept, class-essence or universal. It is the common character of the things which fall under the same class. The universals reside in substances, qualities and actions. They are of two kinds, higher and lower. The higher generality is that of 'being'. It includes everything and itself is not included in anything. Every other generality is lower because it covers a limited number of things and cannot cover all things. A universal cannot subsist in another universal; otherwise an individual may be a man, a cow, and a horse at the same time.

5. *Visesa* or Particularity

The fifth category is *Visesa* or particularity. It enables us to perceive things as different from one another. Every individual is a particular, a single and a unique thing different from all others. It has got a unique of its own which constitutes its particularity. It is opposed to generality. Generality is inclusive; particularly is exclusive. Generality forms the basis of assimilation; particularity forms the basis of discrimination. It is very important to remember that the composite objects of this world which we generally call 'particular' objects are not real particular.

6. *Samavaya* or Inherence

The sixth category is *Samavaya* or inseparable relation called 'inherence.' It is different conjunction or *samyoga* which is separable and transient relation and is a quality. *Samavaya* is an independent category. Kanada calls it the relation between cause and effect. Samvaya is one and eternal relationship subsisting between two things inseparably connected.

7. *Abhava*

The seventh category is *Abhava* or non-existence. Kanada does not mention it as a separate category. Absence of an object and knowledge of its absence are different. The first six categories are positive. This is negative. The other categories are regarded as absolute, but this category is relative in its conception. Non-existence is of four kinds: 1) antecedent non-existence, 2) subsequent non-existence, 3) mutual non-existence and 4) absolute non-existence.

1.9 VAISESIKA ON ATOMS AND CREATION

According to Vaisesika diversity and not unity is at the root of the universe. Vaisesika says that atom is the minutest particle of matter which may not be further divisible.

The indivisible, partless and eternal particle of matter is called an atom (*paramanu*). All physical things are produced by the combination of atoms. Therefore creation means the combination of atoms in different proportions and destruction means the dissolution of such combination. The material cause of the universe is neither produced nor destroyed. It is the eternal atoms.

The atoms are said to be of four kinds; of earth, water, fire and air. Ether or *akasha* is not atomic. It is one and all-pervading and affords the medium for the combinations of the atoms. The atoms differ from one another both in quantity and in quality. Each has a particularity of its own and exists as a separate reality. During dissolution, they remain inactive. Motion is imparted to them by the unseen power (*adrsta*) of merit (*dharma*) and demerit (*adharma*) which resides in the individual souls and wants to fructify in the form of enjoyment or suffering. Atoms are supra-sensible. Atoms increase by multiplication and not by mere addition. When motion is imparted to them by the unseen power, they begin to vibrate and immediately change into dyads. A *dyad* is produced by the combination of two atoms. The atoms are its inherent cause; conjunction is its non-inherent cause; and the Unseen power is its efficient cause. An atom is indivisible, spherical and imperceptible. A *dyad* (*dvyanuka*) is minute (*anu*), short (*hrasva*) and imperceptible.

From the standpoint of ancient Indian philosophy the world including physical nature is a moral stage for the education and emancipation of individual souls. The Vaisesika atomic theory of the world is guided by spiritual outlook of ancient Indian philosophy.

The atomic theory of the Vaisesika explains that part of the world which is non-eternal subject to origin and destruction in time. The eternal constituents of the universe, namely, the four kinds of atoms, and the five substances of *akasa*, space, time, mind, and soul, do not come within the purview of their atomic theory, because these can neither be created nor destroyed. On the other hand, all composite objects, beginning with a dyad or the first compound of only two atoms (*dvyanuka*) are non-eternal. So the atomic theory explains the order of creation and destruction of these non-eternal objects. All composite objects are constituted by the combination of atoms and destroyed through their separation. The first combination of two atoms is called a *dvyanuka* or dyad, and a combination of three dyads (*dvyanukas*) is called a *tryanuka* or triad. The *Tryanuka* is also called the *trasarenu* and it is the minimum perceptible object according to the Vaisesika. The paramanu or atom and the *dvyanuka* or dyad, being smaller than the *tryanuka* or triad, cannot be perceived, but are known through inference.

All the finite objects of the physical world and the physical world itself are composed of the four kinds of atoms in the form of dyads, triads and other larger compounds arise out of these. The world or the universe is a system of physical things and living beings having bodies with senses and possessing mind, intellect and egoism. All these exist and interact with one another, in time, space and *akasa*. Living beings are souls who enjoy or suffer in this world according to their character; wise or ignorant, good or bad, virtuous or vicious. The order of the world is, on the whole, a moral order in

which the life and destiny of all individual selves are governed, not only by the physical laws of time and space, but also by the universal moral law of *karma*. In the simplest form this law means 'as you sow, so you reap,' just as the physical law of causation, in its most abstract form, means that there can be no effect without a cause.

Vaisesika admits the reality of the spiritual substances, souls and God, and also admits the law of *karma*. The atoms are the material cause of the world of which God, assisted by the Unseen power, is the efficient cause. The physical world presupposes the moral order. Evolution is due to the Unseen Power consisting of merits and demerits of the individual souls which want to bear fruits as enjoyments or sufferings to be experienced by the souls. Keeping in view this moral order of the universe, the Vaisesika explains the process of creation and destruction of the world as follows: The starting-point of the process of creation or destruction is the will of the supreme Lord (*Mahesvara*) who is the ruler of the whole universe. The Lord conceives the will to create a universe in which individual beings may get their proper share of the experience of pleasure and pain according to their deserts. The world being beginningless (*anadi*), we cannot speak of a first creation of the world. In truth, every creation is preceded by some order of creation. To create is to destroy an existing order of things and usher in a new order. Hence it is that God's creative will has reference to the stock of merit and demerit act with souls, endowed with the creative function of *adrsta* that first sets in motion the atoms acquired by individual souls in a previous life lived in some other world. When God thus wills to create a world, the unseen forces of moral deserts in the eternal individual souls begin to function in the direction of creation and the active life of experiences. And it is the content of air. Out of the combination of air-atoms, in the form of dyads and triads, arises the gross physical element of air, and it exists as an incessantly vibrating medium in the eternal *akasa*. Then, in a similar way, there is motion in the atoms of water and the creation of the gross element of water which exists in the air and is moved by it. Next, the atoms of earth are set in motion in a similar way and compose the gross element of earth which exists in the vast expanse of the gross elemental water. Then from the atoms of light arises in a similar way, the gross element of light and exists with its luminosity in the gross water. After this and by the mere thought of God, there appears the embryo of a world out of the atoms of light and earth. God animates that great embryo with Brahma, the world-soul, who is endowed with supreme wisdom, detachment and excellence. To Brahma God entrusts the work of creation in its concrete details and with proper adjustment between merit and demerit on the one hand, and happiness and misery on the other.

The created world runs its course for many years. But it cannot continue to exist and endure for all time to come. Just as after the stress and strain of the day's work God allows us rest at night, so after the trials and tribulations of many lives in one created world. God provides a way of escape from suffering for all living beings for some time. This is done by him through the destruction of the world. So the period of creation is followed by a state of destruction. The process of the world's dissolution is as follows: When in the course of time Brahma, the world-soul, gives up his body like other souls, there appears in *Mahesvara* or the supreme Lord a desire to destroy the world. With this, the creative *adrsta* or unseen moral agency in living beings is counteracted by the corresponding destructive adrsta and ceases to function for the active life of experience. It is in contact with such souls, in which the destructive *adrsta* begins to operate, that there is motion in the constituent atoms of their body

and senses. On account of this motion there is disjunction of the atoms and consequent disintegration of the body and the senses. The body with the senses being thus destroyed, what remain are only the atoms in their isolation. So also, there is motion in the constituent atoms of the elemental earth, and its consequent destruction through the cessation of their conjunction. In this way there is the destruction of the physical elements of earth, water, light and air, one after the other. Thus these four physical elements and all bodies and sense organs are disintegrated and destroyed. What remain are the four kinds of atoms of earth, water, light and air in their isolation, and the eternal substances of akasa, time, apace, minds and souls with their stock of merit, demerit and past impressions. It will be observed here that while in the order of destruction, earth compounds come first, then those of water, light and air in succession, in the order of creation, air compounds come first, water compounds next, and then those of the great earth and light appear in succession.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What are the seven categories?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………

2) Explain the Atomic theory of Vaisesika.

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………

1.10 VAISESIKA CONCEPT OF BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

The Vaisesika regards bondage as due to ignorance and liberation as due to knowledge. The soul, due to ignorance, performs actions. Actions lead to merits or demerits. They are due to attachment or aversion and aim at obtaining pleasure or avoiding pain. The merits and demerits of the individual souls make up the unseen moral power, the *adrsta*. According to the law of *Karma*, one has to reap the fruits of actions one has performed whether they are good or bad according to the *karma*s one performed. This *adrsta*, guided by God, imparts motion to the atoms and leads to creation for the sake of enjoyment or suffering of the individual souls. Liberation is cessation of all life, all consciousness, all bliss, together with all pain and all qualities. It is qualityless, indeterminate, pure nature of the individual soul as pure substance devoid of all qualities.

1.11 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to give central concepts of Nyaya and Vaisesesika. Nyaya is a system of logical realism and atomistic pluralism. Nyaya develops logic and epistemology; Vaisesika develops metaphysics and ontology. In this unit we have explained Nyaya theory of knowledge, causation, physical world, God and the proofs for the existence of God. In this unit relating to the orthodox system of Vaisesika, we have discussed Vaisesika categories, atoms, creation, destruction, bondage and liberation. We conclude this unit with the Vaisesika conception that liberation is the real state of the soul free from all qualities and it reduces the soul to a mere nothing.

1.12 KEY WORDS

Perception: Perception is a definite cognition which is produced by sense-object contact and is true and unerring.

Inference: Inference is the cognition which presupposes some other cognition**.**

Comparison: Comparison is called *upamana*. Comparison is knowledge derived from comparison and roughly corresponds to analogy.

Verbal Testimony: Verbal testimony is defined as the statement of trustworthy person and consists in understanding its meaning.

Cause: Cause is defined as an unconditional and invariable antecedent of an effect and an effect as an unconditional and invariable consequent of a cause.

***Padartha*:** *Padartha* means an object which can be thought and named**.**

Dravya: *Dravya* is the substance. Substance signifies the self-subsistence, the absolute and independent nature of things. Substance is the basis of qualities and actions, actual or potential, present or future.

1.13 REFERENCE AND SOURCE BOOKS

Chatterjee, Satischandra & Dhirendramohan Datta. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy.* Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1968.

Hiriyanna, M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy.* London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1951.

Hiriyanna, M. *Essentials of Indian Philosophy.* London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1952.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy*. New Delhi: George Allen & unwin publication, 1983.

Sharma, Chandradhar. *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publication, 1987.

UNIT 2 SAMKHYA

Contents

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the orthodox system of Samkhya
- Interpret the Samkhya theory of causation
- Explain the Samkhya concept of *Prakrti*
- Discuss the Samkhya concept of *Purusa*
- Know the Samkhya theory of knowledge
- Elucidate the Samkhya concept of bondage and liberation
- Comprehend the Conception of bondage and liberation

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The sage Kapila is the founder of the Samkhya system. The Samkhya must be a very old system of thought. Its antiquity appears from the fact that the Samkhya tendency of thought pervades all the literature of ancient India including the *srutis*, *smrtis* and *puranas*. According to tradition, the first work of the Samkhya School is the *Samkhya-sutra*. Next to Kapila, his disciple Asuri, and Asuri's disciple Pancasikha wrote some books which aimed at a clear and elaborate exposition of the Samkhya system. The Samkhya is a philosophy of dualistic realism. Samkhya admits two ultimate realities namely, *Purusa* and *Prakrti* which are independent of each other in respect of their existence. *Purusa* is an intelligent principle, of which consciousness (*caitanya*) is not an attribute, but the very essence. It is the self which is quite distinct

from the body, the senses and the mind (*manas*).It is beyond the whole world of objects, and is the eternal consciousness which witnesses the changes and activities going on in the world, but does not itself act and change in any way. Physical things like chairs, beds, etc, exist for the enjoyment of beings other than themselves. Therefore, there must be the *Purusa* or the self which is distinct from *Prakrti* or primary matter, but is the enjoyer of the products of *Prakrti*. There are many different selves related to different bodies, for when some men are happy, others are unhappy, some die but others live.

Prakrti is the ultimate cause of the world. It is an eternal unconscious principle which is always changing and has no other end than the satisfaction of the selves. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are three constituents of *Prakrti* which holds them together in a state of rest or equilibrium. The three are called *gunas*. But they are not qualities or attributes in any sense. Rather, they are three substantial elements which constitute *Prakrti* like three cords making up a rope. The existence of the *gunas* is referred from the qualities of pleasure, pain and indifference which we find in all things of the world. The same sweet is liked or disliked or treated with indifference by the same man in different conditions. The same salad is tasteful to one, distasteful to another and insipid to a third. Now the cause and the effect are essentially identical. The effect is the manifested condition of the cause, e.g. oil as an effect manifests what is already contained in the seeds. The things of the world are effects which have the qualities of pleasure, pain and indifference. Therefore, *Prakrti* which is their ultimate cause must have the three elements of *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which respectively possess the natures of pleasure, pain and indifference, and cause manifestation, activity and passivity.

The evolution of the world has its starting point in the association of the *Purusa* with *Prakrti* which disturbs the original equilibrium of the latter and moves it to action. The *Purusa* or the self is neither the cause nor the effect of anything. *Prakrti* is the uncaused cause of all objects. Once we realize the distinction between the self and the non-self including the body and the senses, the mind, the intellect and the ego, our self ceases to be affected by the joys and sorrows, the ups and downs of life. It rests in itself as the dispassionate observer of the show of events in the world without being implicated in them.

2.2 THEORY OF CAUSATION

The Samkhya metaphysics, especially its doctrine of *Prakrti*, rests mainly on its theory of causation which is known as *satkarya-vada*. It is a theory as to the relation of an effect to its material cause. The specific question discussed here is this: Does an effect originally exist in the material cause prior to its production, i.e. appearance as an effect? The Buddhists and the Nyaya-Vaisesikas answer this question in the negative. According to them, the effect cannot be said to exist before it is produced by some cause. If the effect already existed in the material cause prior to its production, there is no sense in our speaking of it as being caused or produced in any way. Further, we cannot explain why the activity of any efficient cause is necessary for the production of the effect. If the pot already existed in the clay, why should the potter exert himself and use his implements to produce it? Moreover, if the effect were already in its material cause, it would logically follow that the effect is indistinguishable from the cause, and that we should use the same name for both the pot and the clay, and also that the same purpose would be served by a pot and a lump

of clay. It cannot be said that there is a distinction of form between the effect and its material cause, for then we have to admit that there is something in the effect which is not to be found in its cause and, therefore the effect does not really exist in the cause. This theory that the effect does not exist in the material cause prior to its production is known as *asatkarya-vada* (i.e. the view that the *karya* or the effect is *asat* or non-existent before its production. It is also called *arambhavada*, i.e. the theory of the beginning of the effect anew.

The Samkhyas repudiate this theory of causation and establish their view of *satkarya-vada*, namely, that the effect exists in the material cause even before it is produced. This view is based on the following grounds:

(1) if the affect were really non-existent in the material cause, then no amount of effort on the part of any agent could bring it into existence. Can any man turn blue into red, or sugar into salt? Hence, when an effect is produced from some material cause, we are to say that it pre-exists in the cause and is only manifested by certain favorable conditions, as when oil is produced by pressing seeds. The activity of efficient causes like the potter and his tools is necessary to manifest the effect, pot, which exists implicitly in the clay.

(2) There is an invariable relation between a material cause and its effect. A material cause can produce only that effect with which it is causally related. It cannot produce an effect which is in no way related to it. But it cannot be related to what does not exist. Hence the effect must exist in the material cause before it is actually produced.

(3) We see that only certain effects can be produced from certain causes. Curd can be got only out of milk and a cloth only out of threads. This shows that the effect somehow exists in the cause. Had it not been so, any effect could be produced from any cause; the potter would not have taken clay to produce pots, instead of taking milk or threads or any other thing.

(4) The fact that only a potent cause can produce a desired effect goes to show that the effect must be potentially contained in the cause. The potent cause of an effect is that which possesses some power that is definitely related to the effect. But the power cannot be related to the effect, if the latter does not exist in some form. This means that effect exists in the cause in an unmanifested form before its production or manifestation.

(5) If the effect be really non-existent in the cause, then we have to say that, when it is produced, the non-existent comes into existence, i.e. something comes out of nothing, which is absurd.

(6) We see that the effect is not different from, but essentially identical with, the material cause. If, therefore, the cause exists, the effect also must exist. In fact, the effect and the cause are the explicit and implicit states of the same substance. A cloth is not really different from the threads, of which it is made; a statue is the same as its material cause, stone, with new shape and form; the weight of a table is the same as that of the pieces of wood used in it. The conclusion drawn by the Samkhya from all this is that the effect exists in the material cause even before its production or appearance. This is the theory of *satkarya-vada* (i.e. the view that the effect is existent before its appearance).

The theory of *satkarya-vada* has got two different forms, namely, *parinama-vada* and *vivarta-vada*. According to the former, when an effect is produced, there is a real transformation (*parinama*) of the cause into the effect, e.g. the production of a pot

from clay, or of curd from milk. The Samkhya is in favour of this view as a further specification of the theory of *satkaryavada*. The *vivarta-vada* which is accepted by the Advaita Vedantins, holds that the change of the cause into the effect is merely apparent. When we see a snake in a rope, it is not the case that the rope is only transformed into a snake; what happens is that the rope only appears as, but is not really a snake. So also, God or Brahman does not become really transformed into the world produced by him, but remains identically the same, while we may wrongly think that He undergoes change and becomes the world.

2.3 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

The Samkhya theory of knowledge follows in the main its dualistic metaphysics. It accepts only three independent sources of valid knowledge (*pramana*). These are perception, inference and scriptural testimony (*sabda*). The other source of knowledge, like comparison, postulation (*arthapatti*) and non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*), are included under these, and not recognized as separate sources of knowledge.

Valid knowledge (*Prama*) is a definite and an unerring cognition of some object through the modification of *buddhi* or the intellect which reflects the consciousness of the self in it. What we call the mind or the intellect is an unconscious material entity in the Samkhya hilosophy. Consciousness or intelligence (*caitanya*) really belongs to the self. But the self cannot immediately apprehend the objects of the world. If it could, we should always know all objects, since the self in us is not finite and limited, but all pervading. The self knows objects through the intellect, the *manas*, and the senses. We have a true knowledge of objects when, through the activity of the senses and the *manas*, their forms are impressed on the intellect which, in its turn, reflects the light or consciousness of the self.

In all valid knowledge there are three factors, namely, the subject (*pramata*), the object (*prameya*), and the ground or source of knowledge (*pramana*). The subject being a conscious principle is no other than the self as pure consciousness (*suddha cetana*). The modification (*vrtti*) of the intellect, through which the self knows an object, is called *pramana*. The object presented to the self through this modification is *prameya*. *Prama* or valid knowledge is the reflection of the self in the intellect as modified into the form of the object, because without the self's consciousness the unconscious intellect cannot cognize anything.

Perception is the direct cognition of an object through its contact with some sense. When an object like the table comes within the range of your vision, there is contact between the table and your eyes. The table produces certain impressions or modifications in the sense organ, which are analyzed and synthesized by *manas* or the mind. Through the activity of the senses and the mind, *buddhi* or the intellect becomes modified and transformed into the shape of the table. The intellect, however, being an unconscious material principle, cannot by itself know the object, although the form of the object is present in it. But as the intellect has an excess of *Sattva*, it reflects, like transparent mirror, the consciousness of the self (*Purusa*).With the reflection of the self's consciousness in it, the unconscious modification of the intellect into the form of the table becomes illumined into a conscious state of perception. Just as mirror reflects the light of a lamp and thereby manifests other things, so the material

principle of *buddhi*, being transparent and bright (*sattvika*), reflects the consciousness of the self and illuminates or cognizes the objects of knowledge.

There are two kinds of perception, namely, *nirvikalpaka* or the indeterminate and *savikalpaka* or the determinate. The first arises at the first moment of contact between a sense and its object, and is antecedent to all mental analysis and synthesis of the sense-data.. It is accordingly called *alocana* or a mere sensing of the object. The second kind of perception is the result of the analysis, synthesis and interpretation of sense-data by *manas* or the mind. So it is called *vivecana* or a judgement of the object it is the determinate cognition of an object as a particular kind of thing having certain qualities and standing in certain relations to other things.

Inference is the knowledge of one term of a relation, which is not perceived, through the other which is perceived and known to be invariably related to the first. In it what is perceived leads us on to the knowledge of what is unperceived through the knowledge of a universal relation between two. Inference is first divided into two kinds, namely, *vita* and *avita*. It is called vita or affirmative when it is based on a universal affirmative proposition, and *avita* or negative when based on a universal negative proposition. The third *pramana* is *sabda* or testimony. It is constituted by authoritative statements (*aptavacana*), and gives the knowledge of objects which cannot be known by perception and inference.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What is your understanding of theory of causation?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………..

2) What is the difference between *parinama-vada* and *vivartha-vada*?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………..........................

3) Differentiate between valid knowledge and invalid knowledge.

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………

2.4 *PRAKRTI*

The theory that causation means a real transformation of the material cause leads to the concept of *Prakrti* as the root cause of the world of objects. All worldly effects are latent in this uncaused cause, because infinite regress has to be avoided. It is the potentiality of nature, 'the receptacle and nurse of all generation'. As the uncaused root-cause it is called *Prakrti.* As the first principle of this Universe, it is called *Pradhana.* As the unmanifested state of all effects, it is known as *Avyakta.* As the extremely subtle and imperceptible thing which is only inferred from its products, it is called *Anumana.* As the unintelligent and unconscious principle, it is called *Jada.* As the ever-active unlimited power, it is called *shakti*. The products are cause-dependent, relative, many and temporary as they are subject to birth and death or to production and destruction; but *Prakrti* is uncaused, independent, absolute, one and eternal, being beyond production and destruction. The entire world of objects is implicit in the bosom of *Prakrti,* unintelligent, unmanifest, uncaused, ever-active, imperceptible and eternal. *Prakrti* alone is the final source of this world of objects which is implicitly and potentially contained in its bosom.

Samkhya gives five proofs for the existence of *Prakrti* which are as follows:

1. All individual things in this world are limited, dependent, conditional and finite. The finite cannot be the cause of the universe. Logically we have to proceed from the finite to the infinite, from the limited to the unlimited, from the temporary to the permanent, from the many to the one. And it is this infinite, unlimited, eternal and all-pervading *Prakrti* which is the source of this universe.
2. All worldly things possess certain common characteristics by which they are capable of producing pleasure, pain and indifference. Hence there must be a common source composed of three *Gunas*, from which all worldly things arise.
3. All effects arise from the activity of the potent cause. Evolution means the manifestation of the hitherto implicit as the explicit. The activity which generates evolution must be inherent in the world-cause. And this cause is *Prakrti*.
4. The effect differs from the cause and hence the limited effect cannot be regarded as its own cause. The effect is the explicit and the cause is the implicit state of the same process The effects, therefore, point to a world cause where they are potentially contained.
5. The unity of the universe points to a single cause. And this cause is *Prakrti*.

Prakrti is said to be the unity of the three *Gunas* held in equilibrium. The three *Gunas* are *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. They are the constituents of *Prakrti* and through it of the worldly objects. Being subtle and imperceptible their existence is inferred from their effects - pleasure, pain and indifference respectively. *Sattva* literally means real or existent and is responsible for the manifestation of objects in consciousness. It is called goodness and produces pleasure. It is a light and bright, buoyant and

illumining. *Rajas*, which literally means foulness, is the principle of motion. It produces pain. Restless activity, feverish effort and wild stimulation are its results. It is mobile and stimulating. Its color is red. *Tamas*, which literally means darkness, is the principle of inertia. It produces apathy and indifference. Ignorance, sloth, confusion, bewilderment, passivity and negativity are its results.

2.5 *PURUSA*

Purusa is the principle of pure consciousness. *Purusa* is the soul, the self, the spirit, the subject, the knower the brain and not mind or ego or intellect. It is not a substance which possesses the quality of consciousness. Consciousness is its essence. It is itself pure and transcendental consciousness. It is the ultimate knower which is the foundation of all knowledge. It is the pure subject and as such can never become an object of knowledge. It is the silent witness, the emancipated alone, the neutral seer, the peaceful eternal. It is beyond time and space, beyond change and activity. It is self-luminous and self-proved. It is uncaused, eternal and all pervading. It is the indubitable real, the postulate of knowledge, and all doubts and denials pre-suppose its existence.

Samkhya gives the following five proofs for the existence of *Purusa*;

1. All compound objects exist for the sake of the *Purusa*. The body, the senses, the mind and the intellect are all means to realize the end of the *Purusa*. The three *gunas*, the *Prakrti*, the subtle body - all are said to serve the purpose of the self. Evolution is teleological or purposive. *Prakrti* evolves itself in order to serve the *Purusa*'s end This proof is teleological.
2. All objects are composed of the three *gunas* and therefore logically presuppose the existence of the *Purusa* who is the witness of these *gunas* and is himself beyond them. The three *gunas* imply the conception of a *nistraigunya* - that which is beyond them. This proof is logical.
3. There must be a transcendental synthetic unity of pure consciousness to co-ordinate all experiences. All knowledge necessarily presupposes the existence of the self. The self is the foundation, the fundamental postulate of all empirical knowledge. All affirmations and all negations equally presuppose it. Without it, experience would not become experience. This proof is ontological.
4. Non-intelligent *Prakrti* cannot experience its products. So there must be an intelligent principle to experience the worldly products of *Prakrti*. *Prakrti* is the enjoyed and so there must be an enjoyer. All objects of the world have the characteristics of producing pleasure, pain and bewilderment. But pleasure, pain, bewilderment have meaning only when there is a conscious principle to experience them. Hence *Purusa* must exist. This argument is ethical.
5. There are persons who try to attain release from the sufferings of the world. The desire for liberation and emancipation implies the existence of a person who can try for and obtain liberation. Aspiration presupposes the aspirant. This proof is mystical or religious.

2.6 THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

Prakrti is the fundamental substance out of which the world evolves. *Prakrti* is regarded as essentially dynamic. It is always changing. Even in dissolution there is homogeneous change. Evolution starts when there is heterogeneous change in the gunas and one predominates over the other two. When *rajas*, the principle of activity vibrates and makes the other two vibrate, the process of creation begins. There is neither creation nor destruction of *gunas*. Production is only a manifestation or evolution and destruction is non-manifestation and concealment. Evolution is cyclic – alternative periods of evolution(*sarga*) and dissolution (*pralaya*). *Prakrti* evolves the world of objects when it comes in contact with the *purusa*. Even though *prakrti* and *purusa* are diametrically opposed to each other in their nature they come together just as a blind man and lame man can co-operate in order to get out of a forest; so the non-intelligent *prakrti* and the inactive *purusa* combine and co-operate to serve their respective interests. *Prakrti* needs the presence of *purusa* in order to be known or appreciated by someone(*darsanartham*) and *purusa* requires the help of *prakrti* in order to discriminate itself from the latter and thereby attain liberation(*kaivalyartham*).

Purusa is reflected in the intellect (*buddhi*) and wrongly identifies himself with his own reflection in the *buddhi*. It is the reflection of *purusa* which comes into contact with *prakrti* and not the *purusa* himself. *Samkhyakarika* simply assumes from the beginning that *purusa* and *prakrti* are together, and its analysis includes only a description of the mutual interaction of the principles together with the description of the means to attain freedom. The Process of Evolution: As evolution begins there is gradual differentiation and integration of the three *gunas*; and as a result of their combination in different proportions the various objects of the world originate: *Mahat* (the great) is the first product of the evolution of *prakrti*. It is the basis of intelligence(*buddhi*) of the individual. *Buddhi* emerges when sattva predominates over *rajas* and *tamas*. The special functions of *Buddhi* are ascertainment and decision-making. *Mahat* produces *ahamkara*. It is the principle of individuation. It produces the notion of 'I' and 'mine'. *Ahamkara* is bifurcated into the subjective series and the objective series. *Ahamkara* in its *sattva* aspect evolves into *manas*, the five sense organs(organs of perception) and the five motor organs (senses of action). The 5 sense organs (*jnanendriyas*): functions of sight, smell, taste, touch and sound. The 5 senses of action (*karmendriyas*): functions of speech, apprehension, movement, excretion and reproduction. *Ahamkara* in its *tamas* aspect evolves into the 5 subtle essences (*tanmatras*): the essences of sight, smell, taste, touch and sound. *Ahamkara* in its *rajasa* aspect plays its part in both. The 5 subtle essences evolve into the five gross elements of earth, water, light, air and ether by a predomination of *tamas* (*mahabhutas*). Thus the process of evolution of the universe includes the operation of 24 principles, of which *prakrti* is the first, the 5 gross elements are the last and 10 organs and 5 *tanmatras* are the intermediate ones. All the same it is not complete in itself because it has a necessary reference to the world of selves as the witness and enjoyers. The evolution is purposive. The evolution of *prakrti* into the world of objects makes it possible for the selves to enjoy or suffer the consequences of their

good or bad actions (merits and demerits). The ultimate end of evolution of *prakrti*, therefore, is the freedom (*mukti*) of *purusa*.

2.7 BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

The earthly life is full of three kinds of pain. The first kind, called *adhyamika*, is due to intra-organic psychophysical causes and includes all mental, and bodily sufferings. The second *adhibhutika*, is due to extra-organic natural causes like men, beasts, birds, thorns, etc. The third, *adhidaivika*, is due to supernatural causes like the planets, elemental agencies, ghosts, demons etc. Wherever there are *gunas* there are pains. Even the so-called pleasures lead to pain. Even the life in heaven is subject to the *gunas*. The end of man is to get rid of these three kinds of pain and sufferings. Liberation means complete cessation of all sufferings which is the *summum bonum*, the highest end of life. *Purusa* is free and pure consciousness. It is inactive, indifferent and possesses no attributes. It is above time and space, merit and demerit, bondage and liberation. It is only when it mistakes its reflection in the *buddhi* for itself and identifies itself wrongly with the internal organ - the intellect, the ego and the mind, that it is said to be bound. It is the ego, and not the *Purusa*, which is bound. When the *Purusa* realizes its own pure nature, it gets liberated which in fact it always was. Hence bondage is due to ignorance or non-discrimination between the self and the non-self. Liberation cannot obtain by means of actions. *Karma*, good or bad or indifferent, is the function of the *gunas* and leads to bondage and not to liberation. Good actions may lead to heaven and bad actions to hell but heaven and hell alike, like this worldly life, are subject to pain. It is only knowledge which leads to liberation because bondage is due to ignorance or ignorance can be removed only by knowledge. The *jiva* has to realize itself as the pure *Purusa* through discrimination between *Purusa* and *Prakrti*. Actions and fruits, merits and demerits, pleasure and pain all belong to the non-self. The knowledge that 'I am not (the non-self), that' nothing is mine', that 'ego is unreal', when constantly meditated upon, becomes pure, incontrovertible and absolute and leads to liberation. Samkhya believes that bondage and liberation are only phenomenal. The bondage of the *Purusa* is a fiction. It is only the ego, the product of *Prakrti*, which is bound. And consequently it is only the ego which is liberated. *Purusa*, in its complete isolation, is untouched by bondage and liberation Ishvarakrsna says, that *Purusa* is really neither bound nor is it liberated nor does it transmigrate; bondage, liberation and transmigration belong to *Prakrti* in its manifold forms.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. What is *Prakrti* and what are the justifications given by Samkhya?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………….
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………

2. What are the arguments for the proofs of *Purusa*?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………..

3. Explain the Samkhya concept of liberation.

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………….

2.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to give clear ideas about the central concepts of Samkhya. The Samkhya metaphysics, especially its doctrine of *prakrti*, rests mainly on its theory of causation, which is known as *satkarya vada*. It is a theory as to the relation of an effect to its material cause. *Prakrti* is the ultimate cause of the world of objects. The *Purusa* is an indubitable reality. *Purusa* or self is pure, eternal and all pervading consciousness. Samkhya accepts only three independent sources of valid knowledge. These are perception, inference and scriptural testimony. The other sources of knowledge like comparison, postulation and non-cognition are included under these three, and not recognized as separate sources of knowledge. Finally we conclude the unit with the expression that in the Samkhya system, Liberation is just the absolute and complete cessation of all pain without a possibility of return.

2.9 KEYWORDS

***Prakrti*:** *Prakrti* is the ultimate cause of the world of objects. *Prakrti* is constituted by three *gunas* called *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

***Purusa*:** *Purusa* is an indubitable reality. *Purusa* is pure, eternal and all pervading consciousness.

Bondage: Bondage is non-discrimination between self and non-self. Bondage is ignorance.

Liberation: Liberation is the absolute cessation of all pain.

2.10 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Chandradhar, Sharma. *A Crtical Survey of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal banarsidass Publishers, 1987.

Chatterjee, Satischandra and Dhirendramohan Data. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy.* Calcutta: University Press, 1968.

Hiriyanna, M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*. London: George Allen & Unwin. 1951.

Keith, B. *The Samkhya System*. Oxford: n.p., 1918.

Majumdhar, A.K. *The Samkhya Conception of Personality.* Calcutta: Calcutta University, 1930.

Pandey, M.C. *Origin of the Samkhya*. Bombay: n.p., 1953.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Blackie Son Publishers Pvt Ltd publication, 1983.

Suryanarayana Sastri, S.S. *Samkhya Karika of Iswara Krishna*. Madras: Madras University, 1933.

UNIT 3 YOGA

Contents

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to give a description of Yoga as a philosophy associated with the school of Samkhya as the practical method for achieving the understanding of the self. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the discipline necessary for the pure subject to recognize itself, and separate itself from the empirical reality with which it is confused. In this unit we shall try to give you the meaning of the word 'Yoga'. Since Yoga is defined as the cessation of the modification of *chitta*, this unit also covers *chitta* and its *vrittis*. Again, Yoga also advocates control over the body, the senses and the mind. This involves eight stages and the same is explained in the unit as *Ashtanga* yoga. Finally, it gives a brief study on the theism or the place of God in Yoga. Thus by the end of the unit you should be able :

- To have sufficient understanding of Yoga and its meaning;
- To know about the five kinds of modifications of the *chitta*;
- To interpret eight stages or *Ashtanga* marga of Yoga;
- To comprehend the place and nature of God in Yoga;

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The word 'Yoga' literally means 'union', i.e., spiritual union of the individual soul with the Universal Soul and is used in this sense in the Vedanta. Bhagavad Gita defines Yoga as that state than which there is nothing higher or worth realising and firmly rooted in which a person is free from all pains and misery. But according to Patanjali, who is the traditional founder of the Yoga system, Yoga does not mean union but spiritual effort to attain perfection through the control of the body, senses and mind and through right discrimination between *Purusa* and *Prakrti*. The Yoga-sutra of Patanjali is divided into four parts. The first is called *samadhi-pada* which deals with the nature and aim of concentration. The second, *sadhanapada*, explains

the means to realize this end. The third, *vibhutipada*, deals with the supra-normal powers which can be acquired through Yoga. The fourth, *kaivalyapada*, describes the nature of liberation and the reality of the transcendental self.

Yoga is the practical path of realisation of the theoretical ideals of Samkhya Philosophy. The Samkhya Philosophy emphasises the attainment of knowledge by means of study, concentration and meditation. The Yoga presents a practical path for the realisation of the self. It tells us the way by following which the self can be realised. Yoga admits all the three *pramanas* accepted by Samkhya, i.e, perception, inference and scripture. The *Sadhana* of Yoga is necessary for the study of Samkhya Philosophy. Thus Yoga system of Patanjali, is a complement of Samkhya. Its epistemological theories are based on the ground of Samkhya's metaphysics. Hence, it is rightly said that the Yoga system is the natural complement of practical discipline to achieve the Samkhya ideal of *kaivalya.* Yoga includes moral restraints, and spiritual imperatives, as well as the exercises (*asanas*) designed to withdraw consciousness from the senses, focus the mind and ultimately achieve meditation in which the self is completely and transparently understood. The total and absolute restraint of the mental functions constitutes the Yogic trance. With this restraint the mind empties itself of all contents, it becomes still. The senses then do not receive the messages coming from the external world. In the 21st century the philosophy and practice of Yoga is becoming increasingly popular in the West also.

3.2. MODIFICATIONS OF *CHITTA*

As has been already pointed out the *chitta*, inspite of being material, seems to be like living due to the reflection of self in it. It is these changes in the *chitta* which are known as its *vrittis* or modifications. These modifications are due to ignorance and their result is the bondge. These modifications are five types which are as follows. i) *Pramana*: By being outside, through the sensation, the *chitta* attains the form of objects, this is known as *pramana*. ii) *Viparyaya*: The false knowledge of any thing is known as *Viparyaya* like that of rope-snake. iii) *Vikalpa*:This is the knowledge in which the object which is known does not exist like that of a hare's horn. iv) *Nidra*: The modification of the *chitta* which is the substractum of knowledge of absence of anything is known as *nidra*. But this stage should not be conceived as the total absence of knowledge because after arising from sleep the person has consciousness that he slept well. Hence sleep is also a modification. v) *Smriti*: *Smriti* or memory is the recollection of past experience through the impressions left behind.

3.3. *CHITTA BHUMI*

There are five levels of mental life (*chitta bhumi*). The difference in the levels are due to the predominance of different *gunas*. i) *Ksipta*: The lowest level is called *ksipta* or restless, because the mind here is restless due to the excess of *rajas* and is tossed about like a shuttle cock between different sense-objects. ii) *Mudha* or torpid: The mind here has the predominance of *tamas* and tends towards ignorance, sleep and lethargy. iii) *Viksipta* or distracted: Here *sattva* predominates, but *rajas* also asserts itself at times. This differs from *ksipta* stages because due to the preponderence of *sattva* sometimes there is temporary ceasing of the modification of *chitta* in this stage.

iv) *Ekagra* or concentrated: The stages of *chitta* when it is fixed on one subject. The mind here is entirely dominated by *sattva* and *rajas* and *tamas* are subsided. v) *Niruddha* or restricted: The fifth and the highest level is called *Niruddha*. Here the mental modifications are arrested, though their latent impressions remain. The first three levels are not at all conducive to Yogic life. Only the last two are.

3.4. KINDS OF *KLESAS*

In fact the *Purusa* is the eternally pure and transcendental consciousness. It is the *chitta* with the reflection of the *Purusa* in it or the *Purusa* as reflected in the *chitta*, which is the phenomenal ego or *jiva*, which is subject to birth and death and to all painful or pleasurable experiences. There are five kinds of sufferings (*klesa*) to which it is subject. These are: 3.ignorance (*avidya*) 2. egoism (*asmita*) 3.attachment (*raga*) 4.aversion (*dvesa*) 5.clinging to life and instinctive fear of death (*abhinivesa*). The bondage of the self is due to its wrong identification with the mental modifications and liberation. Therefore means to end this wrong identification is through proper discrimination between *Purusa* and *Prakrti* and the consequent cessation of mental modifications. It is the aim of Yoga to bring about this result.

3.5. *ASHTANGA* YOGA

Yoga advocates control over the body, the senses and the mind. It does not want to kill the body; on the other hand, it recommends its perfection. A sound mind needs a sound body. Sensual attachment and passions distract body as well as the mind. They must be conquered. To overcome them, Yoga gives us the Eightfold Path of Discipline or the *Ashtanga* Yoga. The prescribed eight *sadhanas* to control *chitta* are the following; 1.*Yama*, 2.*Niyama*, 3.*Asana*, 4.*Pranayama*, 5.*Prathyahara*, 6.*Dharana*, 7.*Dhyana*, 8.*Samadhi*.

1. *Yama* (Self-restrained)

Yama is the control of the body,speech and mind. It means abstention . The Yamas are five which are as follows. i) Non-violence (*ahimsa*): It is abstention from injury through thoughts, words and deeds. ii) Truth (*satya*): Truth is to be exact in mind and speech, ie; to speak things as they are and to remember exactly as seen, heard and imagined. Thus it is abstention from falsehood. iii) Non-stealing (*asteya*): It is abstention from stealing. It includes both not taking or stealing another's property and have even a desire for it. iv) Celibacy (*brahmacarya*): It is abstention from passions and lust. *Brahmacarya* is the control of attachment in the enjoyment of the senses. v) Non-possession (*aparigraha*): *Aparigraha* requires not to accept any unnecessary things or collect it. It is abstention from avarice. All the above mentioned yamas are necessary for the concentration of *chitta*.

2. *Niyama* (Positive rules of conduct)

Another important step in Yoga is *Niyama* or following the rules of good conduct. These *Niyamas* are five which are as follows: i) Purity (*sauca*): *Sauca* includes

external cleaning through bath, pure diet etc. as well as internal purification through sympathy, friendliness, detachment etc. ii) Contentment (*santosa*): *Santosa* means satisfaction in whatever is attained by sufficient and suitable efforts. iii) Right aspiration (*tapas*): Tapas includes the practice of tolerance of cold and heat. It requires various types of hard practices. iv) Study of Philosophical texts (*svadhyaya*): *Svadhyaya* means reading of religious scriptures. It is very much useful in the spiritual advancement. Hence it is a necessary principle of good conduct in Yoga. v) Devotion to God (*Iswarapranidhana*): The fifth *niyama* in Yoga is to remember God and to surrender oneself to Him. This helps the aspirant in the practice of Yoga.

The Yoga ethics lays stress on a harmonious relationship between the individual and the society. The positive and negative rules together constitute all that is necessary for a perfect moral life. They are known as *Ten Commandments of Yoga*. Through them the moral foundation of Yogic discipline is made. After the moral preparation comes the preliminary training of one's body frame. It consists of three steps- *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*.

3. *Asana*

The third step in the advancement of yoga is Asana or posture. It means steady and comfortable posture. Asana emphasizes the importance of correct and comfortable bodily posture before one begins meditation. Patanjali mentions that the posture must be firm,pleasant and easy. The idea is that body must be disciplined to assume a posture which is helpful for concentration. This is the discipline of the body.

4. *Pranayama*

It means control of breath and deals with regulation of inhalation, retention and exhalation of breath. The regulating of breathing process helps considerably to bring the mind under control. The Yogi who systematically practices *pranayama* is in a position to control the movements of the lungs and also of the heart. For the Yogi, there is no involuntary organ in the body. The true Yogi can even stop breathing and restart it at his will. It is highly conducive to the concentration of mind. But it must be performed under expert guidance. Otherwise, it may have bad after-effects.

5. *Prathyahara*

It is the control of the senses and consists in withdrawing the senses from their objects. Our senses have a natural tendency to go to outward objects and they perceive the facts of *Prakrti*. They can be compared to a mirror which is facing the other way reflecting everything except the image of the person that holds it. They must be checked and directed towards the internal goal. It is the process of introversion. The above five steps are called external aids to Yoga (*bahiranga sadhana*) while the remaining three which follow are called internal aids (*antaranga sadhana*). The last three steps are stages of mind control and therefore they constitute Yoga proper.

6. *Dharana*

It is fixing of the mind on the object of meditation. Here the mind is steadied by making all our thoughts flow in single unbroken channel. Ordinarily the mind is easily disturbed. It passes from objects to objects in a matter of seconds. The mind is to be tied to a particular object in order that it may become steady and unmoving. Any object like the tip of the nose or the mid point of the eye brows or the image of the

deity may be chosen for meditating upon in this stage. The mind must be steadfast like the unflickering flame of a lamp.

7. *Dhyana*

It means meditation and consists in the undisturbed flow of thought round the object of meditation. It is steadfast contemplation without any break. When the process of thought is continuous, it is called *dhyana*. Meditation is always about something. That something gets fixed in the mind through meditation. *Dhyana* culminates in Samadhi.

8. *Samadhi*

It is the final step in Yoga. It means concentration. Here the mind is completely absorbed in the object of meditation. In *dhyana* the act of meditation and object of meditation remain separate. But here they become one. It is the highest means to realize the cessation of mental modifications which is the end. It is the ecstatic state in which the connection with the external world is broken and through which one has to pass before liberation. Here the spirit is lifted above the world process and is restored to its original stage. Samadhi is of two kinds: Conscious or *samaprajnata* and supra conscious or *asmaprajnata*. In the former consciousness of the object of meditation persists, in the latter it is transcended. The former is *Ekagra* and the latter is *Niruddha*. In the former, the mind remains concentrated on the object of meditation. The meditator and the object of meditation are fused together, yet the consciousness of the object of meditation persists. This state is said to be of four kinds. i) *Savitarka*: When the *chitta* is concentrated on a gross object of meditation like the tip of the nose or the mid-point of eyebrows or the image of the deity. ii) *Savichara*: When the *chitta* is concentrated on a subtler object of meditation like the *tanmatras*. iii) *Sananda*: When the *chitta* is concentrated on a still subtler object of meditation which produces joy, like the senses. iv) *Sasmita*: When *chitta* is concentrated on the ego-substance with which the self is generally identified. Here we have conscious ecstasy where individuality persists.

Asamaprajnata samadhi is the supra-conscious concentration where the meditator and the object of meditation are completely fused together and there is not even consciousness of the object of meditation. Here no new mental modification arise .They are checked (*niruddha*), though the latent impressions may continue. If the fire is restricted to a particular fuel, it burns that fuel alone; but when the fuel has been completely burnt, the fire also lies down. Similarly in conscious concentration, the mind is fixed on the object of meditation alone and modification arises only in respect of this object of meditation. But in supra-conscious concentration, even this modification ceases. It is the highest form of Yoga which is divine madness, perfect mystic ecstasy difficult to describe and more difficult to attain. Even those who attain it cannot retain it longer. Immediately or after very short time, the body breaks and they obtain complete liberation. *Asamprajnata* or *Nirbeeja* (attributeless) *samadhi* is the highest form of *samadhi* in which the distinction between the knower, knowledge and the known, disappears. In it there are no *klesas* or attributes. Hence, it is known as *nirbeeja* or attributeless *samadhi*. This form of *samadhi* is also divided into two subtypes, which are i) *Bhava Pratyaya Samadhi*: Samadhi is disturbed due to ignorance. *Bhava* means ignorance. Ignorance means seeing the self as non-self. In

this form of *samadhi* only the *samskaras* of the passions remain. Thus the ignorance is not absolutely destroyed at this stage due to which even after the attainment of this stage the beings have to return to the world again. ii) *Upaya Pratyaya:* In this type of *samadhi* the ignorance is absolutely destroyed due to arousal of prajna. In it all the *klesas* are annihilated and the *chitta* becomes established in true knowledge. This is the *samadhi* of the Yogis. It breeds the pleasure of the *chitta*, concentration, knowledge etc.

Yoga is the steadiness of the mind, with the annihilation of the mental states, into a particular type of graduated state leading to self realization. Yoga generates certain supra-normal powers. But they should be avoided and attention should be fixed only on the liberation which is the end of human life. The ideal is *Kaivalya*, the absolute independence and eternal and free life of the *Purusa*, free from *Prakrti*.

Check your Progress – I

Note: Use the space for writing the answers.

1. Bring out the nature of the various levels of mental life as expounded by Yoga Philosophy.

----

2. Explain the eightfold path of the Yoga system. What is its goal?

3.6. PLACE OF GOD IN YOGA

The Samkhya in its original form is atheistic. The difference between the Yoga and Samkhya is that while the former asserts a place to God, the latter does not. The Yoga therefore is described as the Samkhya with God. Yoga accepts the existence of God. Iswara is only one of the many objects on which Yogis can concentrate their mind. The only purpose of Iswara is to do good to his devotees. Thus God in Yoga has only practical importance. The meditation on God or *pranava* helps in the concentration of *chitta*. According to Patanjali, *Iswara pranidhana* helps in the attainment of *samadhi*. Thus in the old Yoga philosophy not much theoretical importance has been attached to God. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has also supported this view. According to him, the God of Yoga is not the *summum bonum* of life. Patanjali himself did not consider God as necessary to solve the problems of the world. But the later Yogis have taken also a theoretical interest in Him and have tried to prove His existence as necessary philosophical speculation. Patanjali defines God as a special kind of *Purusa* who is always free from pains, actions, affects and impressions. He is eternally free and was

never bound nor has any possibility of being bound. He is above the law of *karma*. He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He is perfection incarnate. He is the purest knowledge.

Devotion to God is one of the surest means of obtaining concentration. Patanjali thus makes devotion to God as one of the aids of Yoga. The proofs advanced for His existence are: (1) the Veda tells us that God exists (2) the law of continuity tells us that there must be the highest limit of knowledge and perfection which is God (3) God is responsible for the association and dissociation of *Purusa* and *Prakrti* (4) devotion to God is the surest way of obtaining concentration and thereby liberation. By disinterested devotion the yogi becomes eligible for the grace of God. Surrender to God is one of the important principles of Yoga. This conception of God is certainly different from that of the Upanishads. In the Upanishads, God is the *Saguna* Brahman, who is the very social of the entire Universe. But in Samkhya Yoga, God is only a particular Self, *Purusa Visesa*.

God of Yoga is not the creator, preserver or destroyer of this world. He is only a special *Purusa*. He does not reward or punish the souls. Innumerable *Purusas* and *Prakrti*, all eternals and absolutes, are there to limit Him. He cannot grant liberation. He can only remove the obstacles in the upward progress of the devotees. Directly He has nothing to do with the bondage and the liberation of the *Purusas*. Ignorance binds and discrimination between *Prakrti* and *Purusa* liberates. The end of human life is not the union with God, but only the separation of *Purusa* from *Prakrti*. Devotion to God is only a step to this ultimate liberation. Though according to Patanjali, *Iswarapranidhana* is a means to attain *samadhi*, the later yoga philosophers considered it as the best means because God is not only an object of concentration but also he removes the impediments from the path of aspirants and makes the path of yoga easy. By meditating on God with one pointed mind, the intellect is purified and all the impediments are destroyed. The aspirant realises his self through *Iswarapranidhana*.

3.7. EIGHT *SIDDHIS*

According to Yoga philosophy, the Yogis attain various *siddhis* by the practice of the path of Yoga. These powers are mainly of eight types and hence called *Ashta siddhi* or *Ashta Aisvarya*: (1) *Anima*- This is the power to become small like atom and so to disappear. (2) *Laghima*- This is the power to become light cotton and so to fly away. (3) *Mahima*-This is the power to become big like mountains. (4) *Prapti*-This is the power to secure whatever is desired. (5) *Prakamya*-This is the power by which all the impediments in the will removed. (6) *Vashitwa*-This is the power by which all the living beings can be conquered. (7) *Eshitwa*- This is the power by which one attains absolute mastery on all physical objects. (8) *Yatrakamavasayitwa*- This is the power by which all the desires are fulfilled. The above mentioned eight *siddhis* can be used according to the wish of the Yogi. But in the Yoga philosophy the pursuance of the path of the Yoga for the attainment of these powers has been vehemently decried because that results in misleading the aspirant from the path of Yoga. The ultimate

end of the Yoga is not the attainment of these powers, but the realisation of *Moksa*. Thus, Yoga is a combination of practical physical development and discipline with a mystical objective which is its ultimate purpose. This co-ordination of a system of thought with a programme of daily life exercises is based on physiological psychology as well as religious philosophy.

3.8. LET US SUM UP

In this Unit our attempt is to provide a clear idea of Patanjali's Yoga system which enables one to attain *Kaivalya*. Since it is the cessation of the modifications of *chitta*, *chitta* vrttis are dealt in detail. The kinds of *klesas* to which *Purusa* is subjected to, are also given. The eight limbs of Yoga or *Ashtanga* Yoga which leads to self-realization is discussed. As this system is attaining more and more importance these days each step of Yoga is given with detailed explanation. In the concluding part of the unit, the theism of Yoga, i.e., the nature and place of God is also discussed.

Check your Progress – II

Note: Use the space for your answers.

1. What is *Samadhi* according to Patanjali? How can it be attained.?

----

2. What is the place and nature of God in Yoga philosophy?

3.9. KEY WORDS

Kaivalya: Absolute independence and eternal and free life of *Purusa*, free from *Prakrti*.

Chitta vrttis: Modifications of *chitta* or *manas*

Chitta bhumi: Different levels of mental life due to predominance of different gunas.

Klesas: Sufferings to which soul is subjected to.

3.10. FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Legget, Trevor. *Sankara on the Yoga Sutra*: *A full translation of the newly discovered text*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass,2006.

Puligandla, Ramakrishna. *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy.* Delhi: D.K.Printworld, 2008.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy.* Vol. I & II. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958.

Raju, P.T. *Philosophical Traditions of India.* London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973.

Sharma, Chandradhar. *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983.

The Yogasutras of Patanjali: *On concentration of mind*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2005.

Whicher, Ian. *The integrity of the Yoga darshana: A reconsideration of Classical Yoga*. Delhi: D.K.Printworld, 2000. ______________________

–

UNIT 4 *MIMAMSA*

Contents

4.0 OBJECTIVES

This chapter aims to highlight the contribution of Mimamsa to Indian philosophy. A major interest of this school is interpretation. They can be considered to be the first in India to have embarked on interpreting the Vedas (germ of hermeneutic analysis found). Hence this chapter with varied sections on theory of knowledge and metaphysics aims to bring out this aspect. In fact, the section on theory of knowledge contains such interpretative analysis. Some of the basic features of this chapter are:

- interpreting the Vedas
- theory of validity of knowledge
- theory of error
- theory of reality (realism)
- theory of God

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Mimamsa is a philosophical school (advocating realism) in India which developed the ritualistic aspect of the Vedas. It must be noted that the Vedas depict two different aspects – the ritualistic aspect and speculative aspect. Of the 6 orthodox systems of philosophy (*astika darsanas*), - Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya and Yoga developed their philosophies independently though owing allegiance to the Vedas. But Mimamsa and Vedanta are two schools which developed the two different aspects of the Vedas. While Mimamsa developed from the ritualistic side, Vedanta developed from the speculative side of the Vedas. In fact, it is because of this reason that philosophers are inclined to name them as *purva* Mimamsa (early Mimamsa) and *uttara* Mimamsa (later Mimamsa). They were also known as *karma* Mimamsa and *jnana* Mimamsa respectively.

There are two ways in which Mimamsa is useful to us today:

(a) Gives a methodology of interpretation with which the complicated vedic injunctions regarding rituals can be understood.

(b) Provides a philosophical justification of the beliefs on which ritualism depends.

The faith underlying vedic ritualism is substantiated by Mimamsa in the following ways:

1. Belief in the existence of a soul which survives death and enjoys the fruits of the rituals in heaven

2. Belief in some power or potency which preserves the effects of the rituals performed

3. Belief in the infallibility of the Vedas

4. Our life and actions are real and not dreams

Jaiminiya sutra is the work that laid down the principles of this school – *purva* Mimamsa. Hence, Jaimini is thought to be the systematiser of this school of thought. Sabaraswami wrote the major commentary (*bhasya*) for this work. There were many more commentators after him. But the two most famous and important commentators are Kumarila Bhatta and Prabhakara Misra who founded the two schools of philosophy named after them – Bhatta school of Mimamsa and Prabhakara school of Mimamsa. The term 'Mimamsa' etymologically means 'solution of some problem by reflection and critical examination'.

4.2 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

As Mimamsa was interested in interpreting the Vedas, they prominently discussed the nature and validity of knowledge, criterion of truth and falsity, sources of valid knowledge etc.

Nature and Sources of knowledge

That knowledge which gives some new information about something, and is not contradicted by another knowledge and which is not generated by defective conditions (like defective sense organ or fallacious argument) is valid knowledge. Mimamsa admits two kinds of valid knowledge – immediate and mediate. Immediate knowledge arises in the soul when the object is in direct contact with both the internal sense organ (mind) and the external 5 sense organs. This perception arises in two stages – when we see an object, there is indeterminate perception of that object – a bare awareness of it (knowing that it is an object but not knowing what object it is). This is indeterminate, immediate knowledge (*nirvikalpaka pratyaksa*). When we come to interpret that object on the basis of our previous knowledge we understand it as something. That is determinate perception (*savikalpaka pratyaksa*) which is expressed in statements like 'this is a man' or 'this is table' etc. These two stages of perception, no doubt, gives us valid knowledge. However, the objects are not known explicitly in the first stage. Yet, what is known clearly in the second stage is implicitly known in the first stage. This means that the mind only interprets what it sees in the first stage with the help of past experience. It does not ascribe something imaginarily. Hence perception results in valid knowledge.

Now, what we just saw is perceptual knowledge. Are there non-perceptual sources of knowledge? What are they? Mimamsa accepts five more nonperceptual sources of knowledge. They are: inference (*anumana*), comparison (*upamana*), verbal testimony (*sabda*), postulation (*arthapatti*) and nonperception (*anupalabdhi*). The last source of knowledge is accepted only by Kumarila Bhatta's school of Mimamsa and not by Prabhakara's school of Mimamsa.

The Mimamsa understanding of inference is similar to that of Nyaya and hence we need not discuss it here.

Mimamsa understanding of Comparison

After Nyaya, Mimamsa accepts comparison as an independent source of knowledge. According to Nyaya, we get valid knowledge of an object by comparing it with what is already known. That is, we understand the new object through comparing it with what is already known by us. Here, Mimamsa differs from Nyaya school of philosophy. To the Mimamsa, we do not get knowledge of the new object from the knowledge of similarity that exists between this object and the known object but we get the knowledge of similarity that is there between the object that is seen and the remembered object. For example, Nyaya would say that when we see a new object, namely a gavaya (or wild ox), we are told that the wild ox is similar to the domestic cow and that the difference is that the ox is wild. So we derive knowledge of a new object by comparing it with what has already been known. But the same example will be understood by Mimamsa differently. To them, when we compare the ox with the cow that is already known, we derive the knowledge of similarity that exists between the two. This source of knowledge is independent and cannot be classed under perception or inference as done by other schools of philosophy (except Nyaya). The

knowledge of similarity is the new cognition here and that is not derived from any other source of knowledge, according to Mimamsa.

Mimamsa understanding of *sabda*

Sabda is knowledge obtained from verbal authority. This source of knowledge is very important for the Mimamsakas. It is with this that they are going to justify the impersonal authority of the Vedas. It was seen that sabda is of two kinds – personal and impersonal – that is, knowledge derived from the words spoken or written by an individual or knowledge derived from the Vedas which have not been written or spoken by any individual. Again, authority may either give information on the existence of something or merely give directions for the performance of an action. Mimamsa is interested only in the knowledge from the Vedas and that too, about the injunctions laid down in it regarding the performance of certain actions. In fact, they are of the view that any part of the Veda which does not give information on the performance of rituals but is said to speak about the existence of something (immortality of the soul or existence of god etc) is useless. They just wanted to highlight what is essential for the performance of rituals. Hence their philosophy is referred to as ritualistic pragmatism.

According to most of the schools admitting the authority of the Vedas, it is god who is the author of the Vedas. But for Mimamsa, Vedas are impersonal – not written or spoken by any person. They come forward with elaborate arguments to suggest the impersonal authority of the Vedas by asking the following questions.

• If the Vedas had any author, then his name would have been known and remembered.

• Even those who say that Vedas are not eternal but produced are not in agreement with each other on the origin of the Vedas. Some say that god is the author of the Vedas while some say that it is Praja*Pati* or Hiranyagarbha and thus the argument goes on.

• Those people, who regard Vedas to have been written, think vaguely on the basis of the analogy of ordinary books written by human beings and say that even the Veda should have an author.

• The names of certain persons are cited in the Vedas. But they are only seers to whom the Vedas were revealed or the founders of different vedic schools.

• Now, it may be asked that the Vedas are composed of words and that these words are produced and non-eternal. Let us see the reply by the Mimamsakas here. To them, the words are not really the perceived sounds. These sounds are produced by the speaker and heard by the listener, no doubt. But words are really the letters which are partless and uncaused. A letter, like 'k' is uttered and revealed by different persons at different places and times and in different ways. Though these letter-sounds vary, we recognize that the same letter is pronounced. This identity shows that the words are not produced at any time and place, but transcends them. (here, we find a linguistic analysis by the Mimamsakas).

Hence, Mimamsa regards words as letters which are eternal, as having an uncaused existence.

• The Vedas enjoin certain ritual duties which bear fruits like attainment of heaven etc. Now, if the Vedas have been written by anybody, then we have to ask who that person is who has the capacity to know the past, present and future in order to declare the connection between the action and its result.

• If we agree that the Vedas have an author then we might have to agree (with the Carvakas), that this author is a cunning deceiver because of what is contained in the injunctions.

• The Vedas are not vitiated by any defects to which the works of imperfect beings are subject.

Thus, the Mimamsakas hold that the Vedas are impersonal and that they are not the works produced by any person. The applicability of the Vedas to all times itself shows that they are not the products of a particular time, place and individual. The Mimamsakas very clearly state that this knowledge cannot be classified under perception or inference. They assert that the validity of every knowledge is assured by the conditions which generate that knowledge, so the knowledge derived from authority carries with itself such assurance of its own truth.

Mimamsa understanding of postulation (*arthapatti*)

Datta and Chattejee (see *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, p. 325) state that "postulation (*arthapatti*) is the necessary supposition of an unperceived fact which alone can explain a phenomenon that demands explanation". When a given fact cannot be explained without supposing another fact, then this other fact is postulated in order for us to obtain knowledge of that given fact. For example, when we see a man growing fat but fasting during the day, we cannot explain how this is happening. The two facts of fatness and fasting cannot be reconciled. In order to clarify this we need to postulate that this may be due to heredity or because he eats during night. Unless we postulate this, we cannot explain the fatness of the person. This is postulation. This knowledge cannot be brought under perception or inference. The person eating in the night is not perceived by us; nor is there any inseparable (*vyapti*) relation between eating in the night and becoming fat. Hence this source of knowledge cannot be brought under perception or inference.

Another example that can be given here explains that this source of knowledge is used by us in daily life. When, for example, we go to a friend's house and we see that he is not at home, we postulate that he must be somewhere outside. This is postulation. This postulation alone can help us explain how a person who is alive is not to be found in the place where he is supposed to be found. Hence this kind of knowledge cannot be grouped under perception, inference or testimony. We also say that 'industry is the key to success'. Here, the term 'key' does not denote the real key but suggests its secondary meaning. This is postulation.

Mimamsa understanding of non-perception (*anupalabdhi*)

This source of knowledge is accepted by one of the schools of Mimamsa – namely, Bhatta school of Mimamsa and Advaita Vedanta. To them, nonperception is the source of our immediate knowledge of non-existence of a thing. I say that a jar does not exist here only because I do not perceive it. This is non-perception. That is, we should not conclude that all non-perception leads to the conclusion of non-existence of what is not perceived. We do not perceive a table in the dark; nor do we perceive such supersensible entities as atoms, ether, virtue, vice etc. yet, we do not judge them to be non-existent. Why? This is because, if a thing should have been perceived under certain circumstances, only then its non-perception under those circumstances would give us the knowledge of non-existence of that entity. The supersensible entities are those that are beyond our senses. So we cannot say that they are non-existent when we do not see them.

Validity of Knowledge

Validity of knowledge according to Mimamsa is called *svatah pramanyavada*. Let us see what it is. How is knowledge valid? What are the conditions of a valid knowledge? For example, if I have to see a thing, my eye should be free of defect. If there is defect in my eye, then, I cannot see the thing clearly. Hence, the condition that generates knowledge should be free of defect. Only this will result in valid knowledge. Moreover, this knowledge should be beyond doubt. Mimamsa draws two conclusions from this: (a) the validity of knowledge arises from the very conditions that give rise to that knowledge, and not from any extra conditions (*pramanyam svatah utpadyate*). (b) the validity of knowledge is also believed in or known as soon as the knowledge arises; this belief does not wait for any verification by something else. This Mimamsa view is known as the theory of intrinsic validity (*svatah pramanyavada*).

This means that truth is self-evident. It is not verified by any other conditions. That is, the validity of any knowledge is evident in the conditions that generate that knowledge. Now, what if this knowledge is contradicted by any other knowledge? In such a case, we infer the falsity of knowledge. Thus, while validity of knowledge arises from the conditions from which that knowledge arises, falsity of that knowledge arises due to extraneous conditions. Dr S.Radhakrishnan (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol 2) quotes, "*jñanasya pramanyam svatah*, *apramanyam paratah*"

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space for your answers.

1. How Mimamsa interpret the Vedas? Explain with their theory of knowledge.

………………….

…………………………..

……………………………

2. Explain *svatah pramanyavada*.

……………………………..

………………………………..

……………………………….

4.3 MIMAMSA THEORY OF ERROR

If truth is self-evident and every knowledge is true, then, how does error arise? For example, when we mistake a rope to be a snake we are afraid of the rope as long as we think it to be a snake. Only when we realize that it is not a snake and that it is a rope, we come out of that fear. Now, knowledge of rope as a snake is an error. How does this error arise when all knowledge is valid? There are two answers for this question in the two schools of Mimamsa – Bhatta school and Misra school. Let us look into them now.

According to the Prabhakara Misra school, every knowledge is true, and that nothing false ever appears in error. Their theory of error is known as *akhyativada* or denial of illusory appearance. Let us see that view now with the rope-snake example. When I perceive a rope as a snake, there is a mixture of two types of knowledge – the perception of a long thing (perceived thing) and our memory of a snake perceived in the past (remembered thing). Here, the distinction between the perceived thing and the remembered thing is not perceived by us. Hence we are afraid of a rope as though it is a snake. Now, our behaviour towards rope is faulty and not our knowledge (because there are two kinds of knowledge here, namely knowledge of a long thing and our memory of a snake without the knowledge of distinction between them). Therefore, we do not erroneously perceive a rope to be a snake but that there is only a cognitive defect coupled with non-discrimination. This is negative, according to the Prabhakara Misra school of Mimamsa but not the same as error. Error is not merely want of knowledge but a positive mental state.

The Bhatta school of Mimamsa does not accept this view. To them, mere nondiscrimination cannot explain error. We cannot deny that sometimes the illusory object appears positively before us. If my eye-ball is pressed while looking at the moon, two moons positively appear before us. The snake illusion is also similar to this. Now, the Bhatta school argues that when we perceive a snake in a rope and judge that it is a snake, both the subject and the predicate are real. The rope is brought under the class of snakes which also exists. Then how does error arise? It is simple. Error consists, however, in relating these two really existing but separate things in the subject-predicate way. Thus error is always wrong relation and is not to be found in the object. The Bhatta theory of error is known as *viparitakyativada*. Thus the

Prabhakaras exempt all knowledge from error while the Bhattas admit that error may affect some cognitive relations of objects, though the objects themselves are always correctly perceived. One thing common to both schools is that error affects activity rather than knowledge. Thus error becomes an exceptional case of the falsification of the normal claim that every knowledge makes for truth.

4.4. THEORY OF REALITY

Mimamsa theory of reality is based on their theory of perception. When we perceive, we perceive objects. Moreover, the theory of *svatahpramanvada* (theory of intrinsic validity of knowledge) enables us to understand the reality of objects. Mimamsakas are realists and pluralists. The universe is real and is independent of the mind which perceives it. Thus, the world is eternally there for them (it is neither created nor destroyed). However, they also seem to believe in souls, heaven, hell, deities to whom sacrifice is to be performed in addition to the world that is accepted as real by them. The Mimamsakas too, like the Vaisesikas, believe in the reality of atoms. However, they do not postulate an efficient cause for the arrangement of atoms in order for the emergence of the world. Instead, they believe in the law of karma to have regulated the order or arrangement of atoms. Being realists, they categorise the reality. Prabhakara admits of 8 such categories – substance (*dravya*), quality (*guna*), action (*karma*), generality (*samanya*), inherence (*paratantrata*), force (*sakti*), similarity (*sadrsya*) and number (*samkhya*). Kumarila divides all categories into positive (*bhava*) and negative (*abhava*). Prior, posterior, absolute and mutual are the four kinds of *abhava*. The positive categories (*bhava*) are also four. They are substance, quality, action and generality. He brings force and similarity under substance.

4.5 THEORY OF SOULS

Jaimini does not offer any detailed proof of the reality of soul. However, he seems to accept the arguments of the Vedanta. He distinguishes the self from the understanding and the senses. The self is neither the body, nor the senses nor even the intellect. It is the cogniser. Sabara accepts the reality of a permanent cogniser which is "known by itself and incapable of being seen or shown by others", says S.Radhakrishnan (*Ibid*., p. 408). Their interest in interpreting the vedic injunctions as bringing fruits either in this life or in the afterlife has forced them to accept a soul which survives even when the body is destroyed at the time of death. The Mimamsakas accept plurality of selves in order to account for variety of experiences.

4.6 BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

According to Prabhakara, liberation consists in the total disappearance of dharma and *adharma*, whose operation is the cause of rebirth. Another important term that needs mention here is *apurva* (or unseen force or imperceptible antecedent of the fruit of our actions. All acts bear fruits. Of course, not all acts can result in its fructification immediately. Some may effect a result later. Jaimini assumes the existence of such unseen force as *apurva*. It can be considered as the metaphysical link between the action and its result. Now, it is this unseen force that determines whether the soul is in bondage or liberated. Hence Mimamsa prescribes that certain duties as enjoined in the Vedas are to be performed. These duties help man in the right path and thus are responsible for delivering good results. The highest good, according to early Mimamsa, appeared to have been the attainment of heaven or a state of bliss.

However, the later Mimamsa thinkers fall in line with other Indian philosophical schools in holding that the highest good is liberation or freedom from bondage to the body. To them, liberation is an unconscious state, which is free from pleasure and pain. Is Mimamsa atheistic? Mimamsa, we have seen, interprets the ritualistic side of the Vedas. Thus, this school emphasizes the idea of *dharma* – that is, the criteria of discussion here is how man ought to live. Whatever has been said about knowledge, its validity or about error is in relation to this idea of dharma. Now, what is their conception of God? Do they believe in the existence of God? It must be mentioned that the Mimamsakas believe in the authority of the Vedas. But the traditional conception of Mimamsa is atheistic – non-belief in the existence of God. However, authors like Max Mueller finds it difficult to believe that the Mimamsakas, who believe in the authority of the Vedas do not believe in the existence of God (accepted by the Vedas). The Mimamsakas argue that if a creator-God is accepted then He is liable to the charges of cruelty, partiality etc. Therefore, they deny any such creator-God. However, Max Mueller contends that this need not be construed as a case of atheism because, even Advaita Vedanta in India and Spinoza in the West do not accept a creator-God.

However, it must be mentioned that there is no reference to God by the early Mimamsakas while the later Mimamsakas reject the proofs for the existence of God. Thus Mimamsa seems to be atheistic. It might be pointed out that Mimamsa accepts Vedas which talk of a variety of gods – sun, moon, fire etc. These are, at best, deities who are not objects of worship. They are not referred to as existing somewhere bound by space-time continuum; nor are they imaginary entities. Instead, they are eternal and self-manifesting entities described by the eternal, self-revealing Vedas. The Mimamsa was interested mainly in the performance of rituals and these gods were spoken of only in so far as they help man perform the rituals with piety. Thus, we see that "in its great anxiety to maintain the supremacy of the Vedas, the Mimamsa even relegated God to an ambiguous position.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space for your answers.

1. Give the account of Mimamsa understanding of soul.

………………….

…………………………..

……………………………

2. What is Liberation according to Mimamsa?

……………………………..

………………………………..

………………………………

4.7 LET US SUM UP

Mimamsa is an orthodox school of Indian philosophy. It believes in the authority of the Vedas. Realistic (and pluralistic) school of philosophy. However, they are considered to be non-believers in god. Concept of *apurva* is unseen force that delivers the results of our actions. Concept of liberation is attainment of heaven (by earlier thinkers) and freedom from bondage (by later thinkers).

4.8 KEY WORDS

Apurva: unseen force that delivers the results of our actions.

Svatahpramanyavada: theory of intrinsic validity of knowledge.

Viparitakyativada: Bhatta theory of error - Error consists in relating two really existing but separate things in the subject-predicate way. Error is always wrong relation and is not to be found in the object.

4.9 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Puligandla, Ramakrishna. *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy.* Delhi: D.K.Printworld, 2008.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy.* Vol. I & II. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958.

Raju, P.T. *Philosophical Traditions of India.* London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973.

Sharma, Chandradhar. *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983.

Indira Gandhi National Open University **MPY – 001**

School of Interdisciplinary and

Indian Philosophy

Trans-disciplinary Studies

Block
4

ORTHODOX SYSTEMS -2

UNIT 1
Advaita Vedanta

UNIT 2
Visistadvaita Vedanta

UNIT 3
Dvaita Vedanta

UNIT 4
Saivism and Vaishnavism

Expert Committee

Prof. Gracious Thomas
Director, School of Social Work
IGNOU

Prof. Renu Bharadwaj
Director, School of Humanities
IGNOU

Prof. George Panthanmackel, Senior Consultant, IGNOU

Dr. M. R. Nandan
Govt. College for Women
Mandya - Mysore

Dr. Kuruvila Pandikatt
Jnana-deepa Vidyapeeth
Ramwadi,
Pune

Dr Babu Joseph
CBCI Centre
New Delhi

Prof. Tasadduq Husain
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

Dr. Bhuvaneswari
Lavanya Flats
Gangai Amman Koil St.
Thiruvanmiyur
Chennai – 600 041

Dr. Alok Nagims
Vishwa Jyoti Gurukul
Varanasi

Dr. Jose Kuruvachira
Salesian College & IGNOU Study Centre
Dimapur, Nagaland

Dr. Sathya Sundar Sethty
STRIDE
IGNOU

Dr. Joseph Martis
St. Joseph's College
Jeppu, Mangalore – 2

Dr. Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon
147, Kabir park
Opp. GND University
Amristar – 143 002

Prof. Y.S. Gowramma
Principal,
College of Fine Arts,
Manasagangotri
Mysore – 570 006

Dr. Keith D'Souza
St. Pius College
Mumbai

Block Preparation Team

Unit 1	G.K. Parimala Anjaneyanagar, Bangalore.
Unit 2	Dr. James Ponniah Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Ramwadi, Pune.
Unit 3	Dr. V. John Peter IGNOU, New Delhi.
Unit 4	Prof. R. Gopalakrishnan Head (former), Dept. of Philosophy University of Madras, Chennai.

Content Editor

Dr. V. John Peter
IGNOU, New Delhi

Format Editor

Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

Programme Coordinator

Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

The query on ultimate reality that began from the Upanisadic seers received a classical touch in the hands of the commentators of *Brahmasutra, Upanisads* and *Bhagavat Gita.* Various interpretations on the great pronouncements of the Upanishads, *mahavakyas,* regarding the relationship between the individual and supreme self became a point of divergence in Vedantic traditions and had led to establishment of many Vedantic schools. *Prajanam brahma*, consciousness is Brahman (*Aitareya* Upanishad), *Aham bramasmi*, I am Brahman (*Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad, *Ayamatma brahma*, this Atman is Brahman (*Mandukya* Upanishad) – are few of these *mahavakyas.* Three major schools, Advaita, Visistadvaita and Dvaita are treated in this block. The non-dualism accepted and promoted by Advaita Vedanta, the qualified monism of Visistadvaita school and the dualistic school of Dvaita vedanta have come out in defence of their thesis with one's own constructed epistemology and metaphysics. Latest in the addition of Indian schools of philosophy is Saiva Siddhanta from Saivism. It is a pluralistic realist school that upholds triple realities of God, Soul and world.

Unit 1 has a discussion on Advaita Vedanta will deal with the core philosophical issues of the system starting from Gaudapada through Sankara to post Sankara advaitins. Brahman is the only reality according to this school. How it is established and how the world and the human beings are accounted for, are all explained in this unit. In Advaita, Liberation is not a product, but a realisation.

Unit 2 on Visistadvaita which means qualified oneness or non-duality developed by Vaishnavites speaks of oneness of reality qualified by body which is made up of the souls and the universe. Primary difference of this school from that of Advaita is its realistic interpretation of *Maya,* as power of Brahman. The unit highlights the important tenets of the qualified monism.

Unit 3 on Madhva's philosophy which is a dualistic school of Vedanta tradition brings out the views propounded by Madhva on the nature of *Saksi, Visesa, Bheda*, substance and attributes, the universal, space and time are very much ahead of his times and remarkably suggestive.

Unit 4 portrays the unique contribution of Bhakti movements in the medieval period by philosophizing the aspect of surrender, love and relationship between the Divine and the human beings. Saiva Siddhanta from Tamil Saivism and Visistadvaita from Vaishnavism have a unique blend of religion and philosophy.

UNIT 1 ADVAITA VEDANTA

Contents

1.0. OBJECTIVES

This unit is about Advaita Vedanta, its meaning and significance in Indian Philosophy. The word Advaita according to the dictionary is non-dualism, especially in relation to identifying Brahman with the Universal, or with Soul or the sprit and matter. It also means peerless and unique. Literal meaning of Vedanta is the end of Veda. Upanishads came at the end of Veda, they are the *Jnana Kandas*. They teach knowledge of Brahman or the universal Spirit, who is described as both - Creator and Creation, Actor and Act, Existence, Knowledge, and Joy. Upanishad's Major Teachings are – the Self exists, it is immortal without a beginning or an end, essentially non – material, and the self is identical with Brahman, the highest Reality, and the Absolute.

The main feature of Advaita Vedanta is to understand Brahman, the Supreme Soul. To understand Brahman one has to attain knowledge, overcome ignorance, and be liberated and be in vigilant state at the conscious level. Advaita Vedanta teaches three stages of truth. The first stage is the transcendental or *Paramarthika* in which Brahman is the only reality and nothing else. The second stage is the pragmatic or *Vyavaharika* in which both *Jiva* (living creatures and individual souls) and God are true, and the material world is also true. The third and the last stage is the apparent or *Prathibhasika* in which material world reality is actually false, like mistaking a rope for a snake. To comprehend the essence of Advaita philosophy one has to understand these topics: Brahman and Atman, *Avidya* and *Maya* (Ignorance and illusion), *Karya* and *karana* (effect and cause), Knowledge, Attaining Liberation through Knowledge.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Around 7th century Gaudapada, the author of *Mandukya Karika*, a commentary on *Mandukya* Upanishad discussed that there was no duality, awake or dream, the mind moves through illusion (*Maya*) and only nonduality (*Advaita*) is the final truth. The truth is difficult to know because of ignorance or illusion. There is no becoming of the thing by itself or from some other thing. There is only Atman, 'all –soul', there is no individual soul. An individual soul is temporarily delineated, as the space that a jar contains is delineated from the main space; once the jar is broken the space within the jar merges with the vast space.

Sankara built further on Gaudapada's foundation and gave more strength to the Adavita Vedanta. His three major commentaries are on *Brahmasutras*, Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita. Sankara while propounding his philosophy does not start from the empirical world with logical analysis but, rather, directly from the Absolute, Brahman. Sankara's metaphysics stands on the criterion that the Real is that whose negation is impossible. Building his argument that the Upanishads teach the nature of Brahman, he develops a complete epistemology to account for the human error in taking the world as real. He justifies that Brahman is outside time, space, and causality, which are simply forms of empirical experience; no distinction in Brahman or from Brahman is possible.

Sankara strongly supporting that the world is not real but illusion, logically analyses his statement:

1. Whatever remains eternal is true, and whatsoever is destroyed is non–eternal and is untrue. As the world is created and destroyed, it is not real.
2. Truth is unchanging. Since the world is changing, it is not real.
3. Things that are independent of time and space are real, and whatever is in space and time is unreal.
4. Just as one sees the dream in sleep, one sees a kind of dream even when one is awake. The world is compared to this conscious dream.
5. The world is superimposition of Brahman. Superimposition cannot be real.

1.2 BRAHMAN AND ATMAN

According to dictionary meaning, Brahman is sacred learning, a divine source. Brahman is considered as the Supreme, all-pervading spirit and the Soul of the Universe, the divine essence and source of all being from which all created things emanate and to which they return. Brahman as supreme Spirit is not an object of worship in the usual sense of the term, but Brahman is meditated upon by the devout with profound veneration. Mandana Misra accepting Bhartrhari's thesis says that

Brahman is language (*Sabdadvaita*). Brahman is consciousness, and consciousness is the power of speech, so Brahman is speech of the whole Universe manifestation of *Vivarta* (speech). Brahman was the center theme in Upanishads, *Jnana Kanda*. In *Chandogya* Upanishad, *Tat tvam asi*, (that thou art), *Jiva* is identified with Brahman. Brahman and the Self are the one and the same. According to *Advaita* there is no duality. One and many, infinite and finite, the subject and the object etc. are the limitation of consciousness that cannot comprehend the Brahman due to ignorance or *Avidya*. There is no language to describe Brahman, it is like '*neti, neti'*, 'not this, not this.' Understanding Brahman is beyond the senses, He is the purest Knowledge and illuminates like the source of light.

Brahman is self–existent, He is described as '*Sachidananda*' – meaning *Sat* infinite truth, *cit* infinite Consciousness, *ananda* infinite Bliss. Sankara sketches Him as "*Satyam Jnanam anantam brahma*" (*Taitiriya* Up. II.1), Brahman is the Truth, Knowledge and Endless. Brahman is free from any kind of differences or differentiation. Brahman is neither *Sajatiya* (homogeneous) because there is no second to Him nor *Vijatiya* (heterogeneous) because none other than Him exist; *Ekamevadvitiyam*, it is one without a second (*Chandogya* Upanishad). Advaita philosophy is built on the strong hold of Upanishads and Brahmasutra. Upanishads give various incidences where it is highlighted that Brahman = Atman; *Prajanam brahma*, consciousness is Brahman (*Aitareya* Upanishad), *Aham bramasmi*, I am Brahman (*Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad, *Ayamatma brahma*, this Atman is Brahman (*Mandukya* Upanishad). *Brahmasutra* starts with -"*athato brahma jignasa*" (chapter 1 *Samanvaya*: harmony 1.1). Taking these as examples, the philosophy puts forth the unique theory that Brahman is the One, the Whole and only reality. Other than Brahman everything else, including the Universe, material objects and individual are false. Brahman is infinite, omnipresent, omnipotent, incorporeal, impersonal transcendent reality; that is the divine ground for all Being. There is no separation or distinction between Brahman and others in the Universe. That is how when one achieves the *turiya* state, one experiences that one's soul becomes one with everything else.

***Atman*:** *Atman* exactly means breath but according to some it is connected with *aham* (I) and according to others contrast of *avatman*. From Vedic period *Atman* is interpreted as breath, soul, the principle of life and sensation. After the Vedic period, in Indian philosophy, *Atman* is described as the eternal core of the personality which survives after death and transmigrates to a new life or is released from the bond of existence. Upanishads define Atman as part of the universal Brahman, with which it can commune or even fuse. So Atman is deemed to be the central circle identified with *Brahma*. Advaita Vedanta understands Atman not as a part of Brahman that ultimately dissolves into Brahman, but as the whole of Brahman itself. One has to understand how the individual soul, which is limited and one in each body can be same as Brahman. The philosophy argues that Self is not an individual concept, Atman is only one and unique. It is like the same moon that appears as several moons on its reflections on the surface of the water covered with bubbles; Atman appears as different Atman in different bodies.

Atman is the silent witness of all the life happening and free from and beyond sin and merit. It is incorporeal and independent. When the reflection of *Atman* leads to *avidya* (ignorance), *Atman* becomes *jiva* – a living being with a body and senses. Each *jiva* feels that he has his own, unique and distinct Atman called *jivatman*. The concept of *jiva* is true in pragmatic level. In the transcendental level, the *Atman* is equal to Brahman. The Advaita Vedanta explains the relative and the unreal nature of the objective world; it propounds the Advaita (one without a second) and states three levels of experience of the *Atman* – waking (*vaishvanara*), dreaming (*taijasa*) and deep sleep (*prajna*).

1.3 *AVIDYA* AND *MAYA*

Sankara distinguishes Brahman as Higher Brahman and Lower Brahman in his major Commentaries. According to him the Higher Brahman is understood only by knowledge (*Vidya*), He is free from attachment, names and forms; He is *Nirgun*a *Brahman*; this understanding brings about Liberation. *Saguna* Brahman or God according to Sankara is Lower Brahman; he says that this Brahman is viewed from the aspects of ignorance (*Avidya*). Arguing further, Sankara asks when The Higher Brahman is the Absolute where is the cause for the distinction? He further says that The Lower Brahman is the cause of diversity. The entire Advaita philosophy concentrates on how one can understand Brahman. Philosophers discuss the hurdles that are faced while understanding Brahman. The main characteristic to understand Brahman is *Vidya* (Knowledge). Knowledge is possible only when the mind is cleared from doubts and apprehensions. As long as there is no transparency learning becomes ignorance (*avidya*). Gaudapada calls ignorance as *vikalpa* (wrong interpretation) and Sankara calls it as *adhyasa* (superimposition).

Samkhya gives an example for cause and effect; the pot is a transformation of the clay; it is and real. But Advaita philosophy says that except Brahman the rest of the thing is only an appearance, because of *Avidya*. Even the pot and clay, effect and cause become 'unreal' at 'Higher Standpoint' (*Paramarthika*) but 'real' at empirical standpoint (*vyavaharica*). Gaudapada says that people fail to understand at the 'higher point of view" because of wrong interpretation. He gives another example how things are seen differently; One sees a rope at dusk and thinks it as a snake, due to the wrong interpretation of the senses. Sankara calls this wrong interpretation 'superimposition' (*adhyasa*). He defines it as "the appearance, in the form of a memory, of something personally experienced in some other place." Unless one has the idea of or seen a snake, it is not possible to mistake a rope for a snake. Similarly it is natural tendency to superimpose the qualities of the object on its subject and vice versea. Karl H. Potter writes, "…. We identify our self quo seat of consciousness with our self quo body, mind, memory etc. all of which are objects, not subjects, and so have at least one property that the self quo subject cannot have." Sankara identifies such superimposition with the result of *avidya* (ignorance). The only way to overcome ignorance is to thrive by *Vidya* (knowledge).

Maya

There are references to the use of the word '*Maya'* in the Rig Veda and in a few Upanishads as 'mysteries'. Even Advaita Vedanta uses the same meaning in its interpretation of the word '*Maya'*. Gaudapada uses *Maya* in different occasions not only to mean the power of apparently creating things but also to speak of the things so created. This kind of usage is found in Buddhism. In this respect Goudapada is influenced by Buddhism. He does not identify *Maya* with *avidya* but Sankara does. Sankara uses the term *avidya* to speak of that which creates the world of *Maya* or name and form, but does not refer to the world itself as *avidya*. Joshi has pointed out that Sankara is not consistent in this respect. But it is indicated, Sankara uses *avidya* while discussing superimposition and *Maya* while mentioning *prakruti* or *namarupa.* Karl Potter writes, "Sankara makes it known that superimposition does not need a cause as it is beginning less. *Avidya* is for the empirical objects in the world but for the false awareness of those objects."

A few scholars question the identical use of *avidya* and *Maya;* they argue, if ignorance is of jiva, then it belongs to Brahman. *Maya* is God's power to produce the world as illusion. The main concept of Advaita Vedanta is that there is no individual self or *jivas* and everything is Brahman. If such is the case then ignorance is of Brahman. The question arises "What is *avidya*?" Mandana Mishra says that ignorance is *anirvachaniya* (as neither real nor unreal). Sureshwara points out that *avidya* is unreal, so, it does not affect Brahma. However the jiva takes *avidya* for real, so it is jiva which is ignorant. Even though Sankara does not have definite terminology to distinguish between *avidya* and *Maya;* he stresses, "*Avidya* and *Maya* are causing us to experience (superimposition) the thing that we do, which is to give it a positive function beyond that of merely veiling Brahman." *Maya* has a complex illusory power of Brahman which causes the Brahman to be seen as the material world of separate forms. *Maya* has two functions; one is to 'hide' Brahman from ordinary human perception, and the other is to present the material world in its (Brahman) place, *Maya* is also said to be indescribable, though it may be said that sense data entering ones awareness via the five senses are *Maya*, since the fundamental reality underlying sensory perception is completely hidden. The credibility of *Maya* being real or unreal is not for sure. But Brahman is not touched by *Maya*. It is like the magician who is not affected by his own tricks.

Both *avidya* and *Maya* are temporary. An action is not necessary to overcome *avidya*. It is naturally removed by its opposite *Vidya* (knowledge). Knowing needs intention and depends on the agent. For example to milk a cow, what is needed is a cow and the cognition of milking. Whereas, if one has a false understanding, mistake can be rectified by correct information; a false understanding of a rope as a snake is removed when one receives the information that it is rope. Knowledge is gained by personal perseverance to know the Truth. The truth is realized at two levels, one is to study the great Scripture with the guidance of a Teacher (*guru*) and the second level is to examine one's 'miss' interpretation of things and situation. The self examination starts with the questioning of one's own understanding of the present and the previous experiences; one has to examine the reasons for the false interpretation and realize the 'higher' knowledge governed by nothing but the truth: how is that the snake is superimposed on a rope? Is it due to fear of the snake or the failure of the senses to recognize correctly? Are rope and snake two different objects? If they are two distinct

objects then why one is superimposed on the other? Clarity in understanding brings about Truth. The truth is the knowledge.

Check your progress I

Note: Use the space provided below for your answers.

1**.** How does Upanishad characterize Brahma?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

2. What is *Avidya* according to Advaita Vedanta?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

1.4 *KARYA* AND *KARANA* (EFFECT AND CAUSE)

Gaudapada justifies that an object which is not existing at the beginning can exist in the end or in the middle, that is to say an object is not completely nonexistent. He gives an example of a dream. When one dreams, he knows that it does not exist. In sleep, the dream originates, exists for some time; once the sleeper wakes up the dream ceases to exist. Gaudapada says even the objects one sees in wakeful state are unreal as they originate like in dream. He divides objects in two groups–Real (*sat*) and unreal (*asat*). Unreal objects are born and seen to be real. Discussing the relation of cause and effect, he says that both cause and effects are unreal under four possibilities:

1. If the effect is different from the cause, then it is not real
2. If the cause is unreal and becomes real in effect it will be absurd like like son of a barren woman.
3. The cause is real and the effect is not.
4. The last one is, both cause and effect are unreal, in which case nothing ever comes to existence or goes out of existence.

He says that whatever originates has to end, like *Samsara*, emotions etc. Nothing can stay for ever. Sankara’s argument about cause and effect is that when one’s understanding of a thing called A, depends on the persistence of another thing B and it might be a possibility that A and B are similar in nature, but A might not be equal to

B; in such a case, understanding of A does not depend upon understanding of B. For example, a horse can be perceived without the presence of a donkey. And it is further put forth that an agent (*karta*) is necessary for a cause (*karana*) and effect (*karya*). To make a pot, clay is the cause, the pot is an effect, the person who does the pot is the agent, *karta*, as he is the one who gives shape to the pot. Without the agent the effect will not come into existence. Sankara says, “The only thing that one properly functions as agent is the effect itself.” He further states that cause has a pre existence of the effect before it is manifested.

Causality involves relationship between the agent with the nature and the effect with the nature. Agent brings about effect manifestation to our experience. The effect pot is made out of clay. The effect is thus identical in substance with its cause, pre-existent in it is the potency, and this is *sakaryavada.* This causation is called as *parinamavada* and *vivartavada*. Samkhya system adopts *parinamavada;* it says that pot is a transformation of the clay, the cause and effect exist at the appointed time and it is not ‘unreal’. But *vivartanavada* argues that the pot is an object but an appearance is a work of imagination conditioned by ignorance (*avidya*). Advaita hails *vivartanavada* rather than *parinamavada* model. The reality of the cause is in reality only relative of the effect, with the pot the clay is ‘real’. But Sankara says even the clay is not ultimately real. The ultimate reality brings about only Brahma and all the others are considered as *Avidya*. Further discussing the cause and effect, Advaita Vedanta says that *Karya* (effect) is non–different from the *Karana* (cause). Nevertheless *Karana* is different from *Karya.* This principle is called *Karya – Karana ananyatva* (non – difference of the effect from the cause).

It is said - if the cause is destroyed, the effect will no longer exist. For example, in the cotton cloth, if thread is removed, then there will not be cloth, the cloth is destroyed. Similarly, the effect thread, the cause, cotton is removed then there will not be any thread. Sankara taking Brahma sutra 2.1.9 “*Ananyatva Karyakaranayoh karyasya karanatmatvam na tu karanasta kartaymatvam* - despite the non–difference of cause and effect, the effect has its self in the cause but not the cause in the effect. The effect is of the nature of the cause and not the cause the nature of the effect. Therefore the qualities of the effect cannot touch the cause. At the time of the existence, one can easily grasp that the effect is not different from the cause. But the cause is different from the effect is not readily understood. As to this, it is not easy to separate cause and effect. But it is possible by imagination. For example, the reflection of the moon in the mirror, only the form of the moon is seen but it is not the moon itself as it (the reflection) has no moon in it. In Chandogya Upanishad it is said – *Sarvam ca namarupadi sadatmanaiva atyam vikarajatam svatastu anrtameva* – all names and forms are real when seen with the Sat (Brahman) but are false when seen independent of Brahman. *Karya* is not different from the *karana*, nonetheless *karana* is different from *karya*. *Jagat* (the world) is not different from Brahman; on the other hand Brahman is different from the *jagat*.

1.5. KNOWLEDGE

True Knowledge is attained by eagerness to learn. The ambition to know the ultimate ‘Truth’ leads to wisdom. When snake is superimposed on the rope, correct information that it is only a rope not a snake must be clarified. The person who has mistaken the rope for a snake must understand the object rope as the existing thing

and snake as an illusion. Before deciding to perceive an object right or wrong one has to know how the things are perceived in the first place.

Advaita philosophy states that there are six different ways of learning –

- *Pratyaksha* – the knowledge gained by the senses
- *Anumana* - the knowledge gained by inference
- *Upamana* – the knowledge gained by analogy
- *Sabda or agama* – knowledge gained by testimony
- *Arthapatti* – the knowledge gained by superimposing the known knowledge on an appearing knowledge that does not occur with the known knowledge.
- *Anupalabdhi* – the knowledge gained by negation

Among all these the importance is given to verbal testimony *(sabda or agama).*

To acquire knowledge *pramatr* (the subject), the knower of the knowledge, *pramana* (the cause or the means) of knowledge and the *prameya* (the object) of knowledge are very essential. Knowledge is achieved by mediate or immediate, the difference is that while in the first, only 'that' of the object is known, in the second, 'what' is also understood. Both are alike *vritti* (behaviour) of the internal organ in which the *sakshin* (what is present) is imminent. In some cases to obtain knowledge, it does not involve sensory perception. The empirical self is understood immediately but it is not presented to any senses. So, the word '*pratyaksa*' (present to the sense) is replaced with '*aparoksa*' (not immediate). Knowledge is immediate whether it is by the senses or not. The object must be such that one can comprehend directly (*yogya*). For example, a chair is understood by looking at it but not kindness. Other condition is that the object must be present at the time. Finally there must be an intimate relationship between the subject and the object in question. For the external object the *vrtti* flows out to understand where as internal, it originates inside; like understanding happiness or sorrow.

Accomplishment of knowledge happens when subject and object come together and by hypothesis they are removed from each other and occupy a different place in space; the *vritti* relates these two and brings about for the time being identical ground for the two. Describing how the understanding takes place M. Hiriyanna writes, "When an organ is brought in contact with an object, the *antahkarana*, like a search light as it were, goes out towards it and gets itself determined by it or assumes the 'form' of the object. The existence of knowledge is thus necessary so that psychologically, the theory is realistic. When the *vritti* coincides with the object the perceptual knowledge arises." Vritti is internal so it coincides with *jiva*. This brings about the connection between the knower and the known. As these stages of knowing are internal, M. Hiriyanna says that the object is 'felt' rather known. The same thing happens to the internal also like happiness and sorrow, the condition is that at the time of knowing it must be present. In some situation like religious merits '*punya*' and demerits '*papa*' the *anthakarana* cannot understand because of the lack of condition '*yogyatva*' or 'feltness'. They are understood by verbal testimony. Going back to the

mistaking rope for a snake, the *antahkarana* understand the object by *arthapatti.* This wrong understanding can be rectified if the subject is made to realize by *sabda*. Once *anumana* is cleared then it makes way to the True Knowledge.

1.6 ATTAINING LIBERATION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Almost all Indian philosophical systems give importance to 'Liberation' and looks at it as the main aim of the mankind and Advaita is no exception. Advaita Vedanta looks at Liberation as Being, Knowing and Experiencing one's True Self. Pure knowledge is not under other's control nor is it under any control, it is something one has. All it needs is a quest to know the Truth and Reality, once one has the thrust to know immediately the pure knowledge surfaces to understanding. According to Sankara there are four outstanding characteristic of a person who is in quest of the Pure Knowledge. He is able to distinguish between what is eternal and what is not. He will be non attached to present and future actions. He acquires moral virtues like tranquility, restraint etc. He desires liberation, Advaita says that liberation is free from differentiation and identifies only with 'True Self', which is without beginning and end and without any change of any sort. Sankara disputes the idea of the Mimamsas that Liberation is a result of action. Firstly, he says that liberation is identical with 'True Self; the true self does not have a commencement or finish, whereas the result of an action, has a starting and comes to existence when an act is performed. So, the Liberation cannot be the result of an action. Secondly, there are four kinds of actions – *Utpatti*, (the origination), for example, a potter making a pot; *Apati*, (the attainment) of a state, like arriving at a place; *Samskara* (the purification), performing rituals; *Vikara* (the modification), change taking place like milk turning to curds.

To attain Liberation these actions are not necessary. The only entity of Liberation is to cognize Brahman, this is the heart of Advaita epistemology and philosophy of language. Liberation is not a product. Liberation does not change a person; the liberated need not have to become someone or something else. Liberation is not to reach a place (heaven) as a result of an action. The liberated will not die and be born again. Gaudapada says, "There is no liberation." Liberation is similar to the difference in light reflections from a stained mirror to a spotless mirror. Sankara propounds that liberation is not a future state or goal, but it exists in the present, past and the future without any time bound. The Self realization brings about the awareness that Brahman is pure consciousness (*Cit*), awareness (*Jnana*) and witness *(saksin*), Brahman is self luminous, by His light everything shines out. While such an understanding is reached then the relationship between knower and the known merges. There will be no subject and object relationship. Sankara is of the opinion that even the state of Bliss (*ananda*) is not cognized or experienced by the Liberated Soul.

Gaudapada in his work *Mandukya Katika*, book 3, commenting on non duality (*Karika* 37 – 48) states that Liberation is, "Rather the awareness (of the mind), *Samadhi* (concentration), which is beyond language and thought, very calm and unwavering, full of light and without fear. Since there are no thoughts about objects, the awareness rests in itself and attains equanimity." He further argues that it is not easy to reach this state because we are grounded by fear. This is difficult even for the

Yogis. When one reaches this state, one is free from all pain or pleasure because there will be no distinction or awareness of the emotional attachment due to physical senses. The mind will be immersed in the divine light of understanding the Absolute. There is oneness with the whole of the Universe. The liberated man functions like a burnt seed, he will be inactive. It is like liberation in living, the behaviour is to live his life to complete his present life's *Prarabdhakarma*.

Check your progress II

Note: Use the space provided below for your answers.

1. *"Jagat* (the world) is not different from Brahman; on the other hand Brahman is different from the *jagat*." – justify this statement.

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………

2. What is 'superimposition', according to Sankara?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

3. Will Liberation change a person?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

1.7 LET US SUM UP

It is through pure consciousness (*vijnana*) one understands the 'Truth'. Thrust for the 'Truth' does not have a beginning or end. It is always present inside, only one needs to recognize it. When one understands the greatest truth of the Absolute, Brahman that the effect of the world is illuminating like a source of infinite light then he is liberated from the ignorance (*Avidya*) and released from illusion (*Maya*). It is said, "The manifold universe is, in truth, a single Reality. There is only one Great Being, which the sages call Brahman, in which all countless forms of existence reside. That Great Being is utter consciousness, and it is the very essence, or self (Atman) of all being." Advaita upholds that a person can be liberated while still living in the body. The identification of the Self with the Highest Self is the liberation. According to Advaita, "There is neither dissolution nor creation, neither a person in bondage nor any spiritual aspirant neither any seeker after liberation nor one that is liberated this realization is the highest truth." The ethics of the Advaita philosophy stress that the liberated understands the Absolute, Brahman and lead a life and do what they have to do in their life time like a dew drop on a leaf to merge in the Sun light.

1.8. KEY WORDS

Consciousness: awareness (in philosophy) the power of the mind, whether rational or not, to be aware of acts, sensations or emotions

Manifestation: that act or process of showing, making manifest

Perception: the act of perceiving, understanding that is the result of perceiving

Prajnanam Brahma: Consciousness is Brahman (Aitareya Upanishad, Rig Veda)

Aham Brahmasmi: I am Brahman (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Yajur Veda)

Tat tvam asi: That thou art (Chandogya Upanishad, Sama Veda)

Ayamatma Brahna: This Atman is Brahman (Mandukya Upanishad, Atharva Veda)

Athato Brahma jignasa: now therefore the inquiry into the nature of Brahman (Brahmasutra, Chapter one *Samanvaya*: harmony, 1. 1. 1.)

1.9 FURTHER READING REFERENCES

Bhattacharyya, Haridas. Ed. *The Cultural Heritage of India*. Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Institute of Culture, 1969.

Hiriyanna, M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985.

Potter, Karl H. *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*. Delhi: Mothilal Banarsidass, 1981.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy*. Vol. II. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Rao, K.B. Ramakrishna. *Advaita Vedanta: Problems and Perspectives*. Mysore: University of Mysore, 1980.

Rao, Srinivasa. *Advaita - A Critical Investigation*. Bangalore: Jnana Bharati, 1985.

UNIT 2 *VISISTADVAITA*

Contents

2.0 OBJECTIVES

One of the prominent philosophical schools that gave *Bhakti* a philosophical foundation is Visistadvaita which originated in the 11th century C.E in south India. The aim of the unit is to familiarize students with this origin and historical development and to impart to them the basic tents of this school.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Visistadvaita is the name given to the philosophy of Sri Ramanuja and his followers. It means 'advaita" = "oneness" ; "*Visistasya*" = of the Lord who is "qualified." Here the Lord is qualified by a 'body' (*sarira*) constituted by the animate (*cit*) souls and the inanimate (*acit*) universe. While 'visistadvaita' is the name given to the philosophy of Ramanuja, its another name 'Sri-Vaishnavism' stands for the religious aspects of this thesitic school of vedanta. The term 'Sri-Vaishnavism' refers to the system of thought where Vishnu, along with His consort Sri (Laksmi) occupies the supreme position. She is the mother of the entire creation, being the consort of Lord Visnu. She also acts as the mediator (*purusakara*) between man and God and brings about union between them. It is because of this reason the theistic philosophical system of Ramanuja is significantly known as 'Sri-Vaishnaivsm'. It is also known as 'Sri-sampradaya' because 'Sri' is recounted as one of the 'teachers' in the transmission of this tradition. Thus both the expressions Sri-Vaishnaivsm and 'Sri-sampradaya' signify the role of 'Sri' (Laksmi) in the process of liberation.

2.2 THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

Though the origin of 'Visistadvaita' is historically associated with the philosopher Ramanuja, long before him, from the 2^{nd} to the 9^{th} century CE, a group of 12 Vaishnavite mystics—known as Alwars in South India—poured out, in the regional language of Tamil, their love of God and their vision and experiences of the divine through ecstatic, soul-stirring and moving metaphors and symbols. Their outpourings constitute one of the most important scriptures of Tamil Vaishnavism, known as Nalayira *Divya Prabandham* (literally it means 'The Book of Four-thousand Divine Stanzas') that contains the four thousand songs of these Vaishavite saints. These songs are regarded as the primary source book for the philosophy of Ramanuja and his followers. Though these songs probably were in circulation among the people of this region in oral form, it was Nathamuni who set them to writing and put them to singing in the temples. But the tradition has it that Nammalvar, alias Sathakopa revealed these songs to Nathamuni in his yogic trance.

Another great figure in the pre-Ramanuja period was Yamunacharya alias Alavandar, the grandson of Nathamuni. Alavandar picked up Ramanuja as his chosen instrument for propagating the philosophy of the Vedas. He wrote several works such as *Siddhi-traya* and *Girartha Samgraha* and *Stotra Ratna*. Ramanuja never forgets to express his indebtedness to Yamuna by proclaiming his glory in his works. The works of Ramanuja such as *Sri-Bhasya*, *Vedartha-sangraha* and *Gadya-traya* and his commentary on the *Bhagavad-gita* serve as a strong philosophical foundation for the development of Visistadvaita philosophy. Yet it should be noted that some of Ramanuja works in many ways are further developments on and reminiscent of Yamuna's writings. For instance while Ramanuja's commentary on *Brahma Sutra* finds in it good deal of arguments from Yamuna's *Siddhitraya*, former's work of Saranagati Gadya is an imitation of Yamuna's *Stotra Ratna*.

After Ramanuja the school of Visistadvaita got divided in course of time into two groups *Vadagalai* (the Northen School) and *Thengalai* (Southern School) the separation of which was based on eighteen doctrinal matters. While the former sub-school is founded vastly on the views of Vedanta Desika, the latter owes allegiance to the ideas of Pillai Lokacarya.

2.3 THE SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE SCHOOL

According to Visistadvaita tradition, the hymns of Alwars, Divya Prabhandam, were considered to be equal in importance to Sanskrtic Vedas. Sri-Vaishnavites call Divya Prabhandam as the Tamil Veda and they regarded it as authoritative as *Prasthana-trya* (the triple cannon of Vedatanta philosophy:Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahma-Sutra) Since this school considers both Sanskrit and Tamil scriptures as normative and foundational, the Visistadvaita system itself is regarded as Ubhaya-Vedanta (double Vedanta). To the group of authoritative texts, they also add the Vaishanava Agamas and the Puranas especially the Bhagavata Purana.

As mentioned above, one of the distinguishing characters of this school is the pre-eminence given to Alwars and their vision as supreme models of Vaishavite tradition. According to Vaishnavite belief, these Alwars were incarnations of Lord Vishnu's attendants such as Adi-*sesa* and Garuda and the accoutrements such as conch (*sakha*) and the discus (*cakara*). The Alwars, twelve in number including a woman saint (Andal), were born in all castes and strata of society, and in areas widespread in the South. Among the alwars, the most important saint is 'Nammalvar' whose work *'Tiruvaymozhi'* is compared to *'Sama Veda'* in its richness and depth. As their name Alwars (meaning the ones 'who dived into the divine,') denote, they were immersed in God-love and God-bliss and their primary mission was nothing but spreading the glory and love of God. It is to be noted that their vertical love for God encompassed their horizontal relationship with other fellow Vaishnavites and other human beings needing God's mercy.

2.4 PHILOSOPHY OF VISISTADVAITA: AN OVERVIEW

Visistadvaita philosophy believes that the supreme reality is *Saguna Brahman,* a personal being with countless auspicious attributes, and it is a qualified whole of which Brahman is the soul, and the *Jiva* and the *Jagat* (the soul and material nature) constitute the body, which has an inseparabe relationship with the whole. Though it is a non-dual whole, yet it is characterised by internal differences in it. This is why this one reality is called 'Visistadvaita" meaning 'qualified non-dualism'. Here the non-dual reality is made known by its qualities—the souls and the world which are of two different natures. These two kinds of entities are distinct yet real parts of the whole. The 'Visistadvaita" was not coined by Ramanuja but came to be used by others afterwards. Some regard the doctrine of Visistadvaita as absolute realism, without any place for illusion of any kind. There is no category like *maya* which is described in Advaita as an indeterminate existent-non-existent entity. Ramanuja considers such a description as a philosophical fantasy. *Maya* for him is the power of Brahman and its effects are absolutely real, though changing.

2.5 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

According to this school, perception, inference and scripture are valid as sources of knowledge, and each valid source is an affirmation of reality in its own domain. Unlike Sankara Ramanuja does not admit a distinction between illusory perception and true perception, for even in the so called illusory perception there is some perception of reality. Even in the famous mistaken cognition of 'shell as silver' when someone makes a statement that 'this is silver,' it is not only 'this' that refers to what is real, but also 'silver.' In other words, both are the reality of 'this' (the object) and that of the silver (and the identification of the object as something) are real. Visistadvaita argue for their point with the help of the doctrine of *pancicarna* (quintiplicaion), according to which in any given gross element the other four elements are also present as subordinate parts. This school would say that all things should be present in all things. In shell there are particles of silver; and in the so-called illusion (*maya*) 'this is silver' it is the particles of 'silver' that are perceived. And so, the silver-cognition in 'shell' is of the "real", and not of what is fictitious or imaginary. Even in the case of mistaken identity of 'mirage' as 'water' there is some truth in it, because in the desert-sand which belongs to the category of element 'earth' there is the element of 'water'also. Thus knowledge necessarily refers to what is real, even in cases where cognitions are considered to be erroneous. This theory of error is known as *yathartha-khyati-vada* (the doctrine of the apprehension of what is real)

If so how does one distinguish between valid cognition and invalid cognition, if both refer to what is real? The distinction is not a logical one. We cannot even say that in erroneous cognition, the reference is to a part of what is perceived whereas in valid cognition, the reference is to the whole; for in valid cognition too, it is only a part of that is perceived. In shell, for example, the shell-particles do not constitute the whole of the object presented; they too are only a part, although the predominant part. Psychologically, the experience of shell as silver takes place because of greed, defective sense-organ etc. and one sees only the silver-element, although it is minute, and omits to notice the other elements, of which the shell-element is predominant. The distinction between truth and error can be accounted for in terms of success and failure, respectively, in practice. What is of service to people in life is true and what fails to serve people in their practical needs is said to be false. That is why Visistadvaita defines valid knowledge 'as that which reveals an object as it is and is useful in practice.' Thus all knowledge, according to Ramanuja, is of the real.

Vistitadvaita is known for its peculiar view of dual aspects of knowledge (*jnana*) of the *jivas*. The knowledge or consciousness of the *Jiva* has two aspects. The first is its basic or substantive consciousness (*dharmi- jnana*) and the second its attributive-consciousness (*dharma- bhuta-jnana*) By virtue of *dharmi- jnana*, the *Jiva* is only self-aware. It is the *dharma- bhuta-jnana* that makes it aware of others including Isvara. If the substantive consciousness is like light, the attributive consciousness is like luminosity. In the state of ignorance it is almost one with unconscious matter (*Prakrti*) but its *dharmi- jnana* keeps up its individuality and the possibility of developing the *dharma-bhuta-jnana* further. What stands in the way of this expansion

of *dharma- bhuta-jnana* is its load of *karma* from beginningless time. It is the creative process of Isvara that helps this development. When fully developed, it embraces the all-knowing *dharma- bhuta-jnana* of Isvara Himself. The *Jiva* however never merges in Him. Its *dharmi- jnana* keeps up its individuality, just as a wick-light maintains its separateness even when its effulgence becomes submerged in the brilliance of the sun.

2.6 BRAHMAN

Brahman is the basis of all existence. The universe is composed of *cit* (the sentient) and *acit* (the non-sentient) and both have their source in Brahman, and he is the indwelling Self within all and the ruler of all. Brahman is both the first and the final cause of the universe. Like in any other system of Indian thought, the universe alternates between the phases of evolution and dissolution. In the phase of dissolution, the universe goes back to Brahman and remain latent in Brahman and creation or evolution is the actualization of the latent. The one becomes many in the sense that Brahman, by exercise of his will, evolves into twenty-four categories and the *jivas*, or individual souls. Thus Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. To put it differently, God, as the source and support of the universe, has transformed himself into the cosmic manifold; and he is the indwelling Self in his creation, the ruler and director of the cosmic process. The evil that the universe contains is the result of the *karma* of the individuals, for whom God is the dispenser of the Law. But God himself remains unaffected by evil and is forever absolutely good. God, though he has transformed into the universe of sentient and non-sentient forms, remains distinct from them. He is defined in Upanishads as *satyam* (real), *jnana*m (conscious) and *anantam* (infinite). Ramanuja, while commenting on this text, states that because of this distinctive attributes God is above and beyond matter —a changing phenomenon, and distinct from individual souls caught up in the cycle of birth and rebirth. Though, the universe is the transformation of Brahman, he remains by his nature beyond change, and though immanent, he is transcendent.

As mentioned earlier, Brahman is related to the cosmos as the soul is related to the body. As human beings have a soul and a body, and as the soul, though distinct from the body, yet controls and guides it, lives in it, and uses it as an instrument, similarly Brahman is the soul of the universe, the source and sustenance of all beings within it, and the ruler of all. In the metaphor of body-soul relationship between God on the one hand, and the world and the individual *jivas* on the other hand, are present threefold relations defined by Ramanuja: *adhara* and adheya—support and the supported; *niyamaka* and *niyamya*—the controller and the controlled; *seshin* and *sesa*—the Lord and his servant. God as the controller of the universe is absolutely good and the redeemer of all beings. Evil and suffering are caused by individual's *karmas*. *Karmas* —good or evil deeds—create happiness or misery; but by *karmas* alone man cannot redeem himself. Only the grace of God can save him; God is therefore the saviour. In his infinite love, his absolute goodness, he is forever merciful and takes *avatara* to redeem them.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. What is the meaning of Visistadvaita?

…...
....
....
....
....
…...
..........................2. Describe Ramanuja's idea of *maya.*

…...
....
....
....
....

3. Is Brahman the material and efficient cause of the universe? Is God transcendent and immanent?

…...
....
....
....
....

2.7 *JIVAS* OR INDIVIDUAL SOULS

The Visistadvaita philosophy establishes that the finite self is an eternal spiritual entity yet not a separate self-existent entity, but an organ, an element of Brahman. It is part of Brahman, essentially different from him but inseparably bound to him. *Jiva* always maintains its distinctiveness even though it is part of Brahman. Even in the state of *Moksa*, it does not lose its individuality. *Jivas* are infinite in number. It is monadic in substance (*anu*). Svetasvatara Upanishad (V 9) says that the self is infinitely smaller than the hundredth part of the point of a hair divided a hundred times and yet it is infinite in range. The monadic character of *jiva* is its natural form. That is, it is not caused or conditioned by any physical limitation. The finite self is essentially an attribute (*prakara*) of God. As substance and attribute, they are inseparably associated with God on the one hand, and distinct from one another and from God on the other hand. As inseparably associated with God, the individual self is eternal; and as distinct from him, it has a personality of its own.

The *jivas* are essentially of the nature of knowledge (*jnana-svarupa*). They are not merely of the nature of knowledge but are also the substrata of knowledge (*jnanasrya*). The individual self which is the knower is also the agent of action (*karta*) and enjoyer of pleasure and pain (*bhokta*). It is to be noted that *jiva* is regarded as knower in the sense that it is the *asraya* or a substratum for knowledge through which all experiences take place. By being a substratum (*asraya*) for *jnana* which is subject to modifications, *jiva* is not subjected to any change. In the same way *kartrtva* and *bhoktrtva* admitted in *jiva* do not involve change in it. *Jiva* is *karta* or doer in the sense that it is the *asraya* or substratum for *krti* or effort. Effort is caused by a desire (*iccha*) to do an act. It is therefore a mental modification or an *avastha* of *jnana*. It is not to be confused with the actual physical activity which follows subsequent to the desire to do an act. In so far as *jiva* is the *astraya* for the *krti* which is a particular state of knowledge, *jiva* becomes the *karta*. The change involved in the physical activity does not affect the *karta*. The same explanation holds good for *jiva* being the *bhokta*. Pleasure and pain are different states of mind resulting either in an agreeable disposition of mind (*anukulatva-jnana*) or in a disaggreable disposition of mind (*pratikulatva-jnana*) respectively. As *jiva* is the *asraya* for such states of experience, it is regarded as *bhokta* or enjoyer of pleasure and pain. The change involved in such mental dispositions applies to the attributive-knowledge and not to *jiva*. Such an explanation is logically tenable in the Visistadvaita system because of the admission of *dharma-bhuta-jnana* as distinct from *jivatman*. The modification applies to the former, while the latter remains unaffected.

2.8 THE MEANS OF LIBERATION

According to Visistadvaita system, *Bhakti* (loving devotion) and *Prapatti* (whole-hearted self-surrender) are the alternate means of liberation. They are adopted by people according to their own eligibility and taste. *Bhakti* basically means loving devotion towards God. The term (*Bhakti*) derived from the root *bhaj* = 'to share, partake, to enjoy' calls for a reciprocal relationship between the deity and the devotee. *Bhakti* is not a mere emotional pursuit, according to Ramanuja. It involves training one’s mind and intellect towards love of God. Non-stop constant contemplation is the very essence of *Bhakti*. It implies an unperturbed total concentration on God. Ramanuja compares it to the continuous flow of oil poured form one vessel to another. *“tailadharavad avicchinna-smriti-santana-parampara,”*

In Ramanuja's view, various terms such as “*upasanam*”, “*dhyanam*”, “*niddhyasanam*” found in the Upanishads, along with the term “*janam*” are all synonymous with *Bhakti*. By *Bhakti* is meant unbroken chain of thoughts on God. When that is assured, liberation is near at hand. Traditionally, *Bhakti* has several aspects like *sravana* (listening to the discourses on the Lord), *Kirtana* (singing His glories), *Smarana* (remembering Him), *Padasevanam* (serving Lord's lotus feet, i.e., worshiping him in the sacred places), *arcanam* (doing pooja to him according to the rules laid down in the sacred texts), *vandanam* (doing namaskaras/prostrations), *dasyam* (serving him like a servant), *sakhyam* (becoming his friend) and *atmanivedanam* (offering everything one has, including the body, to the Lord).

Sri Vaishanava tradition points out that this *Bhakti* can be cultivated through seven steps, called the "*Sadhana-saptaka*." They are: *Viveka, Vimoka, Abhyasa, Kriya, Kalyana, Anavasada and Anuddharsha.* They can be explained as follows:

Viveka: Discrimination of food. Taking *sattvic* food (sweets, fruits, ghee, etc.) makes one's mind pure. Purity of mind leads to steady contemplation on the Lord.

Cf. "Aharasuddhau sattvasuddhih, sattvasuddhau dhruva smritih." (When the food is pure, mind becomes pure; when the mind is pure, recollection of the Lord becomes steady).

Vimoka: Cessation of all desires for material enjoyment.

Abhyasa: Repeated thinking on the Lord.

Kriya: Performing "five great *yajna*s" (*Panchamahayajnas*) according to one's cap*acit*y. They are:

1. Study of sacred scriptures/ teaching them (*Brahma-yajna*),
2. Offering food etc. to the departed spirits (*pitr-yajna*).
3. Performing fire sacrifices for the gods (*daiva-yajna*)
4. Offering food to the other beings like animals (*bhuta-yajna*) and
5. Hospitality to the guests (*narayana*).

It may be noted that according to the traditional view, those who are not invested with the sacred thread and women are not eligible to perform the first of the five *yajna*s listed above, namely, Brahma *yajna* which involves teaching/ studying the Vedas. "Brahma" here means the "Veda."

Kalyana: Cultivating auspicious qualities like truthfulness, non-injury to animals and straightforwardness.

Anavasada: Displaying unwavering faith, not losing one's heart even in the worst calamity but continuing contemplation on God with cheerfulness.

Anuddharsa: maintaining moderation and not becoming over-joyed even when there appear indications that God is becoming favourable.

Visistadvaita holds that although these seven steps are prescribed to cultivate *Bhakti*, they are not easy for an ordinary man to follow. Hence it is declared that *Bhakti* is difficult to practice in the manner expected of the devotees. In contradistinction to *Bhakti*, *Prapatti* or whole-hearted surrender is easier. It can be adopted by one and all, without any distinctions of caste, creed or sex. It can be adopted at any time and place. All are eligible for it. *Prapatti* is also known as *Saranagati*, *Nyasa, Bharanyasa*, *Atmanikshepa, Thyaga, Samnyasa, Namaskarta* etc.

Prapatti, like *Bhakti*, is only a kind of mental attitude towards God. If one thinks one can please God by one's own personal efforts like *kirtana*, *vandana*, etc. one is called a *Bhakta*. If however, one feels convinced that one cannot please God by one's own personal efforts, and that nothing apart form God's grace can save him or her, one becomes a *Prapanna*. *Prapatti* needs to be done only once. It need not be done again and again, as *Bhakti*.

There are five subsidiaries (*angas*) or *Prapatti*. They are:

1. *Anukulya-sankalpa*: Resolve to do only things favourable to God and wishing good for all
2. *Pratikulya-varjana*: Avoiding things disliked by God.
3. *Raksishyati iti visvasah* (*Mahavisvasah*): Firm faith in the saviourship of God.
4. *Goptritva-varanam*: Requesting the Lord to be the protector.
5. *Atmaniksepa-karpanyam*: Placing one's burden at the feet of the Lord in all meekness and humility.

These five angas make *Prapatti* complete and efficacious. Of all these, *Mahavisvasa* is the very heart of *Prapatti*. Without it, all the other *angas* become insignificant.

The later Srivaisnava teachers add one more point to the means of liberation. Apart from *Bhakti* and *Prapatti* "*Acaryanistha*" is also capable of procuring *Moksa*. It consists of trusting one's own *acarya* as the savior. Those who entertain this view argue that since one's *acarya* himself has done *Prapatti* to the Lord, one need not separately do it. *Tengalai* holds that since Sri Ramanuja did *Prapatti* in his life-time, his followers, direct and indirect are exempted from doing individual *Prapatti*. The *Vadagalai*, however, contend that what Sri Ramanuja did was for his own sake and that the successors of his have to do *Saranagati* separately, for their own good. According to those who advocate this *Acarya-nistha*, even the Supreme Being becomes unimportant when compared to the guru. Madurakavi Alvar, for instance, declared in his *Kanninn_Siruthambu* that his own guru Nammalvar was more important to him than Lord Krsna Himself, whom Nammalvar resorted to.

2.9 THE TWO SECTS OF SRI-VAISHNAIVSM

As mentioned earlier, after Ramanuja Sri-Vaishnaivsm got divided into two sects namely Vadagalai and Thengalai. While Vadagali considered the Sanskirt scriptures (vedas) more authoritative than the Tamil scriptures (*Divyaprabhandam*), Thengalai believed just the opposite. Subsequently, Vadagalai privileged the teachings of Risis over those of the Alwars and the Thengalai considered the teachings of Alwars more important than those of Risis. Further, while the northern school believed in *Markata-nyaya* (monkey's model) for *Moksa* (liberation) giving more emphasis on effort than grace, the southern school promoted *Marjara-nyaya* (cat's model) that

regarded grace more important than human effort to attain liberation. The northern school recommended *Bhakti* (unbroken chain of thoughts on God) as a means of liberation for the male twice-born and advocated *Prapatti* (self-surrender) to others as another means of liberation. The southern school regarded *Prapatti* as the only means of salvation and prescribed it for all. Even if one were to practice *Bhakti*, it has to mature into *Prapatti* for one to attain liberation.

2.10 COMPARISON WITH OTHER TRADITIONS

The philosophy of Visistadvaita can be easily compared with and contrasted to other schools of thought. For instance while Sankara's Advaita believes in Nirguna Brhaman as the supreme reality, Ramanuja's school regards Saguna Brahman as the supreme reality: For Sankara, the world is unreal and for Ramanuja the world is real. For Sanakara, *Jnana marga* is the only means of liberation while Ramanuja believes in the *Bhakti*/*Prapatti marga* to attain liberation. Further while Sankara believes in *Jivanmukti* (liberation while living), Ramanuja believes in *Videhamukti* (liberation only after death). Besides, one can find similarity between Sri-Vaisnavism and Christianity. Both believe in the idea of personal God as the supreme being. Both believe in liberation after death. Both believe in the role of grace in salvation and both understand liberation as state of union with the ultimate, without losing one's distinct identity.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. Does knowledge, action and enjoyment affect the *jiva*? Explain.

…..
....
....
....
....

2. According to Sri-Vaishnava tradition can all regardless of caste and sex practise *Bhakti*? Why?

…..
....
....
....
....

3. Which sect in Sri-Vaishnavism believes in *Prapatti* as an all-inclusive means of liberation and why?

…...
....
....
....
....

2.11 LET US SUM UP

In the history of philosophy in India, Visistadvaita is described as a system of thought that gave a strong philosophical and theological foundation to the practice of *Bhakti* found in the popular traditions of different linguistic cultures across the country. While one can become wary of intense *Bhakti* as a form of emotional outburst, Visistadvaita has brought intellectual content to the practices of *Bhakti* and *Prapatti* as it is described above. By doing this, on the one hand they have built an intellectual domain for *Bhakti*, but on the other hand, they have shown the limitations of human mind and its efforts in matter of 'faith' by their belief in *Prapatti*. Besides, historically speaking, Visistadvaita grew as a competing philosophical discourse to the Advaita of Sankara. While the latter makes this world as unreal in order to preserve the transcendence of God, the former found a way out by making the world as real part of God, thus enabling its practitioners to deal with the world in a non-dualistic and non-conflictual manner. Thus Visistadvaita can be praised as a balanced philosophical system of thought in India.

2.12 KEY WORDS

Dharma- bhuta-jnana: The knowledge or consciousness of the *Jiva* has two aspects. The first is its basic or substantive consciousness (*dharmi- jnana*) and the second its attributive-consciousness. By virtue of *dharmi- jnana*, the *Jiva* is only self-aware. It is by means of the *dharma- bhuta-jnana* that the *jiva* becomes aware of others including Isvara. *Dharma- bhuta-jnana* has to evolve and grow in human beings. What stands in the way of expansion of *dharma- bhuta-jnana* is its load of *karma* from beginningless time. It is the creative process of Brahman that helps this development. When fully developed, it embraces the all-knowing *dharma- bhuta-jnana* of Brahman Himself.

***Bhakti* :** *Bhakti* is a loving devotion towards God. *Bhakti* is not a mere emotional pursuit , according to Ramanuja. It involves training one's mind and intellect towards love of God. It calls for an unperturbed total concentration on God and unbroken chain of thoughts on God. But these demands of *Bhakti* cannot be met by ordinary common man and woman.

***Prapatti* :** *Prapatti* stands for wholehearted self-surrender to God. *Prapatti* is easier than *Bhakti*. It can be adopted by one and all, without any distinctions of caste, creed

or sex. It can be adopted at any time and place. All are eligible for it. *Prapatti* is also known as *Saranagati, Nyasa, Bharanyasa, Atmanikshepa, Thyaga, Samnyasa, Namaskarta etc.*

2.13 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Adidevananda, Svami. Trans. *Sir Ramanuja Gita Bhasya.* Madras: Ramakrishna Math, n.d.

Carman, John Braisted. *The Theology of Ramanjua: An Essay in Interreligious Understanding.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974.

Chari, Srinivasa S.M. *Fundamentals of Visistadvaita Vedanta.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987.

Devamani B.S. *The Religion of Ramanuja - A Christian Appraisal*. Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1990.

Hiriyanna M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994.

Hooper, J.S.M. *Hymns of Alvars.* Madras: Pioneer Book Series, 1985(1929).

Mahadevan, TMP. *Invitation to Indian Philosophy*. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1974.

Prabhavananda, Swami. *The Spiritual Heritage of India*. Madras: Ramakrishna Math, 1977.

Rao, Nagaraja P. *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Indian Book Company, n.d.

UNIT 3 DVAITA VEDANTA

Contents

3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit has an objective of introducing the dualistic school of vedanta developed by Madhva.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Dvaita is one of the living systems of *Vedantic* thought in India, having its own well-defined community of followers, religious institutions and extensive philosophical literature in Sanskrit, and a substantial body of devotional literature in Kannada. *Dvaita* system has been the chief rival in thought to the *Advaita* of Sankara, in the history of Indian Philosophy. It stood up for realism in Indian thought against all forces of idealism and acosmism. The followers of Madhva, especially Jayatirtha and Vyasatirtha, present the logical skill and depth of acute dialectic thinking almost unrivalled in the whole range of Indian thought.

Madhva derives his philosophical tenets from the three authoritative *prasthanas* (the *upanisads, the Bhagavadgita,* and the *Brahma sutras*), from the *puranas* and *Mahabharata*. The quintessence of Maduva's philosophy is that Visnu *(Hari)* is the supreme God, the world is real and the difference between God and soul does actually exist. All the living beings are dependent upon Visnu, and they are divided into higher and lower classes; liberation consists in the enjoyment of bliss that is inherent in oneself; pure devotion is the means of attaining it.

3.2 MADHVACARYA: LIFE AND WORKS

Madhvacarya of 12th Century AD is the founder of the Dvaita Vedanta. Traditionally he is also known as Anandatirtha and Purnaprajna. His birthplace is said to be the village of Pajaka near Udupi in Karnataka. Madhva proclaims himself as the third incarnation of Vayu after Hanuman and Bhima. Madhva was a many-sided personality. He had a stupendous memory and he was a splendid debater. Although he accepted *Sannyasa* at the hands of Acyutapreksacarya, a renowned Advaita teacher he opposed sankara's monistic tenets and interpretations. He was convinced that the sacred texts don't propagate the *mayavada*, but the realistic theism. Madhvacarya installed the idol of Lord Krsna at Udupi which has become a centre of the *Dvaita Vedanta* with the tradition of *ashtamaths,* with his eight disciples.

Madhva is a prolific writer in Sanskrit both in prose and in verse. He quotes profusely from Vedic, Buddhist, Jaina and other systems of philosophy and religion of India. In short he was scholar, saint, philosopher and mystic. The works of Madhva are thirty-seven in number. Some of his major works are his commentaries on *Prasthanatraya (Gita, Brahmasutra* and *Upanishads*), commentaries on Vedas, Epics and *puranas,* and his Ten *prakarnas* (other writings). In his tradition, there have been commentaries (*tikkas*) on Madhva's works written by Jayatirtha and Vyasatirtha.

3.3 DVAITA: ITS NOTION AND MEANING

The term '*Dvaita,*' meaning dualism, posits more than one fundamental metaphysical principle to explain the universe or a fundamental distinction between the human souls and the Supreme Being. Dualism is a theory which admits of two independent and mutually irreducible substances. In it a fundamental twofold distinction is drawn. In Western philosophy dualism is clearly seen in Plato's any fundamental twofold distinction between the intelligible and the sensible; in Descartes' distinction between two substances, mind and matter; and Fichte's distinction between ego and the non-ego, may be described as dualistic. Among the classical Indian tradition, Samkhya propagates dualism with its two fundamental eternal categories constitutive of reality namely, *Purusa* and *Prakrti,* spirit and matter.

Madhva has put more depth into the meaning of the term '*Dvaita*' as it is applied to his thought. The dualism of Madhva admits two mutually irreducible principles as constituting reality as a whole. Yet God is regarded as the only independent (*svatantra*) and the other as dependent (*paratantra*). The Supreme Being is the one and only independent principle. All finite reality comprising of the *Prakrti, Purusas*, *Kala, Karma, Svabhava,* etc is dependent. For dvaita vedanta these dependent categories are reals and also eternal. Madhva advocates pluralistic theism. To maintain the unity, sovereignity and independence of the Supreme Being, dualism of Madhva upholds that the dependent reals are not in spite of the Lord, but because of Him. Therefore, for dvaita vedanta, although there are two principles, yet one of them (finite) dependent completely on the other for its being and becoming. There is another aspect of dualism of Madhva. It is its 'realistic' attitude to the experiences of life. Our finite experiences of embodied existence and our efforts to achieve liberation from bondage have both a real value and validity of their own and are not mere illusion created by a*vidya* as held by Advaitins. Again, in *Dvaita vedanta* since '*Bheda*' or difference is the very nature of being, along with Brahman, the principles like *Jiva* and *Prakrti* are co-eternal and uncreated, but they are dependent on God.

3.4 GENERAL PHILOSOPHY OF MADHVA

Philosophy of Madhva is contained in his commentaries on sacred texts. Specially, he shares the prominent place along with Sankara and Ramanuja as one of the systematizers of Vedantic thought. His commentary on *Brahma Sutras* as established his unique system of dualistic vedanta. As Sankaracarya, Ramanujacarya developed their own theory and interpretations on the Upanishadic teachings and the teachings of the *Brahma sutras,* and called their systems Advaita and visistadvaita, Madhvacarya's system is called *Dvaita Vedanta*. The basic issue dealt in all these three systems is

regarding the relationship between Brahman, the individual soul (*Jiva*) and the world (*jagat*). Madhvacarya refuted the *mayavada* theory of Sankara in his system of advaita. He upheld the world is not bundle of illusory objects created out of maya and avidya. For him the world is real but of course dependent on the Brahman. In the same way, Madhva differed from Sankara who said that the individual self is not different from the supreme self. The identity of the *Jiva* and Brhman is somehow established in advaita vedanta. In dvaita vedanta, for Madhva, *Jiva* (soul) is different from Brahman and not identical with Him. In the same way, Madhva also rejected the claims of qualified monism. Without reconciling with the *Visistadvaita* of Ramanuja the philosophy of Madhva held that that *cit* (spirit) and *acit* (matter) are different realities from Brahman and donot form His body (*sarira*). For, in qualified monism we find that Ramanuja considered the world and the souls are part of the whole reality, the Brahman. We shall elaborately see these distinctive teaching in the following sections, how Madhva different from the other schools of vedanta. The speciality of the philosophy of Madhva lies in his advocacy of various differences. He spoke of the reality of five-fold differences between – soul and God, soul and soul, soul and matter, God and matter, one material thing and another. Thus the concept of difference (*bheda*) is central to the philosophical system of Madhva. That is the reason one can call his philosophy as pluralistic. Since he speaks of the reality of the external world and of the souls, we consider the dvaita vedanta as realistic. In his concept of God, we find Madhva propagating theistic principles and worship. Therefore one can call the philosophy of Madhva as theistic. It accepts a personal God who is the only independent (*svatantra*) reality, the other real beings entirely dependent on Him.

3.5 METAPHYSICS OF DVAITA VEDANTA

Concept of God

As we have seen earlier, Madhva recognizes two kinds of reality, independent (*svatantra*) and dependent (*paratantra*). God is the independent reality. Individual souls and the world are dependent realities. He speaks of God as a personal God. God is the supreme person called Isvara. He is completely independent, perfect, absolute and pure consciousness. He is *savisesa*. He possesses infinite qualities. He assumes various manifestations. The supreme Lord is Visnu. Laksmi, the consort of Visnu, is eternally blessed and absolutely accomplished. She eternally contemplates Visnu. Laksmi is dependent on Visnu. She is intelligent *Prakrti*. *Prakrti* is the material cause of the world. The Lord enters into *Prakrti* and makes himself into many. The Lord's will is *Prakrti*.

The understanding of God in dvaita vedanta is theistic. It is his 'theology' so to say. This is described as uncompromising theism. For Madhva, Visnu is the Supreme God. The purpose and goal of all the scriptures (*sadagamas*) is revealing and making that Supreme known to people. That is to say the prime import (*mahatatparya*) of the sacred texts is Vishnu. Not only the scriptures, even Madhva asserts that every word in the language primarily signifies Visnu and refers only secondarily to other objects. The language of people is only to signify God.

With regard to the attributes and qualities of the Supreme God, Visnu, Madhva is a great theologian. Visnu possesses all auspicious, blessed, infinite and eternal attributes. The relation between God and His attributes is governed by the principle of

visesa, by virtue of which a thing is distinguished from its permanent attributes though they are identical in essence. There is no fundamental distinction between God and His attributes. He is the Supreme Reality possessing all excellences like infinite knowledge, bliss, power, etc. He manifests in various forms, incarnates as *avataras* and is present in the Sacred images. He is apprehensible through the Vedas (*sruti*) though not fully comprehensible. (Dominic Vas, 2010)

As any theistic understanding would go the Supreme God is everything in relation to the world. For him, Visnu is the efficient cause (*nimitta-karana*) of the universe. He is the cause of creation (*srsti*), preservation (*sthithi*) and destruction (*pralaya*). In His relation to the souls, He is the liberator. As He himself is the primary cause of, the bondage of *samsara* (chain of existence) for the soul. The so called apparent causes of bondage such as ignorance (*avidya*), action (*karma*) and the subtle body (*linga-sarira*) are only the secondary causes of the chain of existence. Ultimately God's grace is needed for removal of bondage though the efforts are fruitful initially from the part of the *jiva.* For Madhva, it is Vishnu's grace (*prasada*) alone which can give salvation (*mukti*) to the *Jiva.*

Concept of *Jiva*

Jiva by essence is spiritual consciousness that is partless. This *Jiva* possesses knowledge and bliss. In this possession *Jiva* is similar to God but is dependent on God. For Madhva, God is the perfect *Jiva*, and the individual *Jiva*s are only images of God. Madhva defended the distinction and plurality a
mong the *jivas.* (We shall later speak of various other differences Madhva's philosophy has.)This becomes also a feature of his realism. He classifies *Jiva*s. Some are not liable to pain, some are liable to pain as they are on their way to purification. Yet some others are eternally punished. These are the evil souls who become so weighed down by karma that they are not able to rise. Accordingly, each *jiva* is distinct and unique because of its *Yogyata*. Each *Jiva* resembles and reflects God. It becomes a *pratibimba,* reflection of the *bimba,* Visnu in accordance with its *svarupa*. This distinction (*taratamya*) of the *Jiva*s remains a foundation for his theory of gradation among the *Jiva*s, starting from *Laksmi* and coming down to those bound for hell. In agreement to each one's *svarupa,* according to Madhva, there are three kinds of *Jiva*s. The first kind of *jivas* are those who are fit for liberation (*muktiyogyas*). The second ones are those that are caught in the cycle of birth and rebirth (*nithyasamsarins*) and travel endlessly in their journey. In the third category, there are souls that are eternally condemned to hell (*tamoyogya*). By making such a distinction, *taratamya* among the *Jiva*s Madhva tries to give an original solution to the problem of evil, and to lift God (*Visnu*) above all blame for evil in the world. (Dominic Vas, 2010)

Concept of World

The world is *Prakrti* and is not created by God as it has eternal existence. The external world is affirmed to be ultimately real (*satya*) and continues to exist at all times. The world process is beginningless and eternal (*anadi* and *nitya*). All the material products originate from prakrti or primal matter. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are its three gụnas. The *Dvaita* conception of causation differs from the well-known views of *Advaita* and *Viṣistadvaita.* It is known as *Sad-asat-karya vada*, ie. the effect is considered as neither existent only nor non-existent. It exists as the cause, but not as the effect.

In his metaphysical thought the unique contribution of Madhva is the notion of *'bheda'* and '*visesa'*. Madhva accepts five fold difference or *bheda* in reality, namely, the difference between God and soul (*Isvara* and *Jiva*), between soul and soul (*Jiva* and *Jiva*), between God and matter, between soul and matter, and between different material objects. Difference doesn't mean Independence. God (Vishnu) alone is independent reality (*svatantra-tattva*), and all other beings are dependent on God (*Paratantra-tattva*). The system of Madva accepts ten categories: Substance (*Dravya*), attribute (*guna*), action (*karma),* universals (*samanya*), speciality (*'visesa'*), the specified ((*visista'*), the whole (*amsin*), potency (*sakti*), similarity (*sadrsya*) and non existence (*abhava*). Substances are twenty in number. Of these, Brahman, and souls are sentient (*cetana*). The rest are insentient (*acetana*). The twenty substances are: *Brahman*, *Laksmi*, *Jiva*s, space (*akasa*), Time (*kala*), primal matter (*Prakrti*), and its eight evolutes, the cosmic egg (*Brahmanda*), ignorance (*avidya*), speech sounds (*varna*), Darkne*ss (timira*), mental impressions (*vasana)* and reflection (*pratibimba*). (Dominic Vas, 2010)

3.6 EPISTEMOLOGY

Foundation of Madhva's metaphysics of differences among realities of God, soul and the world lies in his epistemology. For Madhva, the world of objects and things exist independently of human mind. It is a realistic perspective of dvaita as opposed to the doctrine of *mayavada* of Sankara. This doctrine of realism is characterised by the epistemological position that the mind perceives the objects and knows them. Humans experience the object and the objectivity of the human knowledge is manifested in different *pramanas*. The means of knowledge (*pramanas*) are perception, inference and verbal testimony (revealed scripture). For him to perceive is to become aware of something 1) as unique, 2) as being different from the other thing, 3) as being different from the perceiving self. Hence knowledge is the articulation of these perceived differences. Perceptual knowledge is direct and immediate knowledge. Knowledge is intrinsically valid. If we deny perception there is no knowledge. For Madhva the *pramanas* are means of knowledge (*anu-pramans*) or knowledge itself (*kevala-pramanas*). Each of the *pramanas* is therefore self-valid, true and objective knowledge. Eventhough they are all valid knowledge they are not equal. Madhva says that there is a hierarchy among them, each having one's own importance in its sphere and supports the other *pramanas.* Perception is valid and important in its own sphere and is useful for the later inference, and so on.

The sense-organs, *manas* and *Saksin* constitute the instruments of knowledge. The notion of *Saksin* as a sense-organ is unique in Madhva's system. Etymologically, the word *Saksin* means a witness, a seer or one endowed with vision. Madhva defines it as *Saksad iksate iti Saksi.* Thus the *Saksi* is the name of the spiritual sense organ of the self or its *caitanya-indriya* (essential sense organ partaking of the nature of consciousness) through which it intuits its experiences. But it is not different from the self. It is the self itself. *Saksin* is the ultimate and unassailable basis for the intrinsic validity of knowledge. For self-validity is the nature of *Saksin* itself. *Saksin* is the source of all knowledge in the individual, and ever-vigilant witness of one's own validity. This is so true that there can be no error where the knowledge of *Saksin* is concerned. *Saksin jnana* is infallible. For nothing can come in between the witnessing

self and its light. All error, therefore, is due to the malfunctioning of *manas* and the other senses. Error or illusion consists in the mis-perception of the non-existent as existent and of the existent as non-existent. A distinction is made by Madhva in *agama* as *paruseya* and *aparuseya*. The latter constitutes the vedas (s*ruti*) whose validity is infallible. Madhva's doctrine gives great importance to vedas (*sruti)* as a means for the true knowledge of Supreme Reality since perception and inference are confined to the facts of ordinary experience only. (Dominic Vas, 2010)

3.7 BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

Madhva accepts the reality of human misery and bondage. *Maya* causes the individual to be unaware of the relationship of the soul with God. Ultimately it is God who makes *maya* cause bondage. Hence, he alone brings liberation through his grace although there is self-effort on the part of the soul. The devotee, on his part, must prove himself worthy of it by good works *(karma*), acquisition of right knowledge (*Jnana-yoga)* and single-minded devotion (*bhakti- yoga*). The *adikarins* should work out his salvation by an ascetical striving – through the hearing of the scriptures *(sravana*), reflection (*manana*) and contemplation (*nidithyasana*) under the guidance of a guru. This will lead the person to *bimbopasana*, and further to the immediate cognition (*aparoksa-Jnana*) of Visnu, and to *mukti*.

In dvaita Vedanta understanding, liberation is achieved through the knowledge of the greatness of God. Liberation is possible by devotion to God by *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana*. Through *bhakti* combined with meditation one can dispose oneself to the experience of God. Visnu's favour and grace (*prasada*) a human being can be liberated from them and attain *moksa* or liberation. Hence, finally it is God's grace that removes *maya* and liberates the soul.

Liberation consists in the realization of soul's innate bliss. Then according to his *Yogyata* he will attain bliss and occupy a place reserved for him in the galaxy of the elect. He will not be absorbed in the Absolute to the extent of losing his self-identity. And yet he will be united with the Lord in knowledge and love, and with other emancipated *Jivas* in a family of intimacy.

3.8 GENERAL ESTIMATE OF DVAITA VEDANTA

Madhva through his system, has made a great impact in Indian philosophical tradition. He classified reality into "*Svatantra*" and "*Paratantra*". He rationalised the conception of substance and attributes with the doctrine of "*Visesas*" in terms of an identity-in-difference. The concept of "*saksi*" as an *apriori* principle of knowledge is his contribution in Indian epistemology. By his commentaries he brought in the reconciliation of the existence of "eternal substances" (*nitya - padarthas*) like *Jivas, Akasa, Prakrti* etc., with that of the acceptance of the universal causation of Brahman. He achieved it by his doctrine of creation defined as "*Paradhina-Visesapti.*" He brought in a realistic notion of reality. His understanding of god and soul, metaphysical notion in general, and his ethical concepts and practices are well supported by his defence of means of knowledge. One could say, thus, his metaphysics and ethics are fruits of his well-worked out epistemological theories.

Dvaita Vedanta is called as theistic, dualistic (pluralistic) and realistic, from different perspectives. Madhva was convinced that we can have knowledge of other realities, and thus man can really reach truth. This truth has objectivity, or correspondence of our knowing mind with the object of knowledge. He believed in a personal God and essential difference between God and man. Again, he believed in the Saguna Brahman who can be reached through *bhakti* (devotion), emphasising self-surrender and God's grace. These two concepts make Dvaita vedanta different from the other Indian systems. For him, all *jivas* are destined by God to attain bliss after a life of *samsara,* or to continue to remain in it or to go into the hell of eternal darkness. The doctrines of souls that are liberated (*mukta*) and those eternally damned has a parallel in Jaina religious thought also. Jains distinguish two groups of souls. They are those who are redeemed (*bhavya*) and those which cannot be redeemed (*abhavya*).

His vedantic interpretations of the *Brahmasutra,* brought in a unique system of philosophy as his counterparts like Sankara and Ramanuja. He has written many learned commentaries on the basic texts of Vedanta – the *Vedanta sutras* of *Badarayana*, the *Upanisads* and *Bhagavad Gita*. While all the other Acaryas have attempted in their *Bhasya*s only to establish a *samanvaya* (harmony) of the various terms and doctrines found in the U*panisads*, Madhva has established the *samanvaya* of the upanisadic thought with the *Puranas* and *Itihasas* as well. (Dominic Vas, 2010)

3.9 LET US SUM UP

Madhva's philosophy is one of dualism. The thinkers of *Dvaita* School have made many outstanding contributions to the problems of Philosophy. The views propounded by Madhva on the nature of *Saksi, Visesa, Bheda*, substance and attributes, the universal, space and time are very much ahead of his times and remarkably suggestive. The devotional movement of the Haridasas of Karnataka was a spontaneous expression of Madhva's religious thought in the regional language of the majority of its adherents and its appeal reached the common people. *Dvaita* literature is very extensive; much of it still remains unpublished and unexplored. Plurality of the reals is the basic doctrine of dvaita. According to Madhva, difference is the very nature of things. He identifies five eternal levels of difference: Difference between God and the individual soul, God and matter, one individual soul and another, individual soul and matter, and one material thing and another. He looks upon the world as real. For *Dvaita* God is the highest Being, the most perfect Being, the only free Being, the ultimate goal and destiny of humans; He is the giver of salvation / liberation through grace (*prasada*). The path of bondage and liberation is also realistic.

3.10 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Madhvacarya, *Sarva-Mula-Granthah; Collection of the Complete Works of sriMadhvacarya*. Ed. by Bannanje Govindacarya. Vols. 1-5. Bangalore: Akila Bharata Madhva Maha Mandala, 1969 – 1974.

Glasenapp Helmuth Von. *Madhva's Philosophy of the Vishnu Faith*. trans. by Shridhar B. Shrothri and ed. by K. T. Pandurangi. Bangalore: Dvaita Vedanta Studies and Research Foundation, 1992;.

Govindacarya, Bannenje, *Madhvacarya.* trans. by K. Krishnamurthy and U. P. Upadhyaya. Udupi, Sri Pejavar Mutt, 1984;

Puthiadam, I., *Vishnu the Ever Free: A Study of the Madhva Concept of God.* Madurai, Dialogue Series, 1985.

Ramachandran, T. P. *Dvaita Vedanta.* New Delhi: Arnold Heinnman, 1976/

Sharma, B. N. K. *Philosophy of sri Madhvacarya.* Dehli: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991.

Raghavendrachar, H.N. and Wadia, A.R., *The Dvaita Philosophy and Its Place in the Vedanta*. Mysore: The University of Mysore, 1941.

Sharma, B. N. K. *History of the Dvaita School of Vedanta and Its Literature*. Deldi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1981.

Vas, Dominic C. *Origin and Destiny, St. Thomas Aquinas and Sri Madhvacharya: A Comparative Critique.* Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2003.

Vas, Dominic. "Dvaita." *ACPI Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* Vol.1. (Bangalore: ATC, 2010), 425-426.

Vas, Dominic. "Madhva." *ACPI Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* Vol.2. (Bangalore: ATC, 2010), 847-851.

UNIT 4 SAIVISM AND VAISNAVISM

Contents

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The unit gives a brief picture of saiva and vaishnava religious thought. By going through this lesson the students would be able to have the general characteristics of these religions, their scriptural basis and their emergent philosophical systems.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Saivism is a religion, being practised by millions of people in India and those migrated to other countries all over the world. It is a realistic, ritualistic and pluralistic religious system. This religion acknowledges the supremacy of Lord Siva as the Supreme God, who has been included as one among the major Gods of Hindu pantheon. The literal meaning of the word 'siva' is auspicious who is adored as an embodiment of grace and wisdom. Saivism is very well recognized as a philosophy of religion and goes by the expression Saiva Siddhanta. The first part of this expression viz 'saiva' refers to Saiva faith which has full of religious significance such as temple, idolatory, rituals, prayers, objects of worship, chanting of mantras and devotional songs, devotees festivals, service, yoga etc. the term 'siddhanta' indicates the philosophical outlook of Saivism which mainly deals with the three fundamental realities viz, *Pati* (siva), *pasu* (souls) and *pasa* (bonds) and their interpenetration. Hence Saivism is a well developed intellectual faith which avoids two extremes such as dogmatism or dry intellectualism and superstition or blind observances.

4.2 ORIGIN OF SAIVA RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Like any other sect included in the generic term 'Hinduism,' Saivism too has no founder or founders. Only a galaxy of saintly souls hasve enriched the glory of this

religion through their incessant pilgrimages and impressive devotional utterances and propagating the ideals, doctrines and practices through institutional methods especially by establishing several religious mutts. As there is no human founder to Saivism, it is a healthy convention to attribute to Lord Siva as the founder since the saints express their gratitudes in their spontaneous outpourings for recognizing their services rendered to Him to His creation as well as uniting them with Himself as His 'person.' This attitude the shows the intimate rapport the saints had with Lord Siva. In their devotional utterances they make references, knowingly or unknowleingly, to God, who had His descent to this earth to make them as His person, His gracious nature, forms, appearances, testings, transcendence, immanence etc., their own personal reactions, modifications, cravings, cryings, troubles, tortures, agonies, ecstasies, illuminations, enlightenment, etc. Besides these, they also reveal the pernicious nature of the empirical world (though it is real), its attractive nature, but at the same time serving as a resourceful platform to work out their salvation through renunciation. These three major messages directly fall under the legitimate province of the philosophers who have evolved the grammatical expositions of God, soul and the world.

A few sages in Saivism, along with their staunch devotion to God and their metaphysical bent of mind have made explicit the implicit doctrines embedded in the outpourings of the saints. The philosophy of Saivism technically known as 'Siddhanta' means accomplished end. As a prelude to this type of venture, the sages have presented and criticised the non-Saiva and other saiva schools of thought from the Siddhanta point of view. The alien faiths which atheistic in outlook, some schools even after accepting a God do not recognize the supremacy of Lord Siva, a few faiths claiming to be Saivism, go against the well established Siddhanta doctrines are taken up for presentation and criticism. They are known as *parapakkam* or *purva-paksa* (the views of the opponents). After this dedicated venture, the sages devote themselves in bringing forth their own view-points viz, the Siddhanta or the well cherished doctrines by means of three eternal categories known as *Pati* (Siva), *Pasu* (souls), and *Pasa* or the impurities. The devotional songs have been codified as the twelve canonical literature (*panniru tirumuraigal)* and the philosophical treatises are known as fourteen philosophical texts known as Siddhanta Sastras. Hence, Saivism is studied, clarified, understood and realized throught these devotional and metaphysical scriptures.

4.3 SCHOOLS OF SAIVISM

Saivism, also known as the southern school of Saivism or Tamil Saivism, recognizes the authority of the Vedas, Saiva Āgamas, Upanishads and Siva-puranas which are in Sanskrit language. Of these the Vedas are regarded as the specific scriptures while the Agamas are the specific scriptures. The former is prescriptive like having injunctive statements. The latter is descriptive since they describe about the modes of worship. The Agamas promote systematic worship. They explain the method of constructing a Siva temple, the methods of worshipping the presiding Deity at the appropriate times, the objects of adoration, the ways of chanting the holy syllables (*mantras)* etc. The Saivites believe that both the Vedas and Agamas are poured out by Lord Siva and no human author has been attributed for their existence. There is a belief among certain scholars that the word Siva has been derived from Rudra, one of the Vedic deities,

who was malevolent in the beginning and made later as a benevolent deity. The word 'rud' means red and Siva has red complexion hence 'Siva' is a derivative of Vedic Rudra. Also Rudra was worshipped as *Pasupati*, the Lord of the souls and later Siva has been called as *Pati* and souls, *pasu*. Some are of the opinion that Siva in Tamil means auspicious, therefore He is a Tamil God. The ancient Tamil liteary works like the Tholkappiam, Manimekalai, SilapPatikaram, Purananuru etc., refer to the characteristic features of Lord Siva without referring to His name. Especially during the time of the Nayanmars (the sixty three devotees of Siva) the worship of Siva flourished with the same title. References of Siva are also found in the Ithihasas like the Ramanyana and the Mahabharata.

We have also other schools of Saivism such as Virasaivisim or Lingayata religion, Kashmir Saivisim (Trika System) Sivadvaita of Srikantha etc. Virasaivism emerged in the Karnataka region to curtail the influence of Jainism and Sri Vaishnavism in the South. It is more or less a social renaissance movement propounded by Basava. It insists on the worship of Siva in the Sivalinga form only especially wearing a Sivaling on the body to indicate the constant touch of the divine on the human. This religion insists on ethical discipline more than philosophical expositions. Kashmir Saivism emerged in the valleys of Kashmir and it is also known as Pratybhijna system which empasises the recognition of the soul after annihilating the onslaught of the impurities, that it is none other than Siva Himself. This school of thought commences with Saivism, passes through Sakti visistadvaita and culminates in monistic doctrines of Advaita. Srikantha has interpreted the prastana traya, the basic texts of Indian philosophy in terms of Saivism rather than Vedanta. Brahman has been replaced with Siva and an advaitic union takes place between Siva and the soul at the time of emancipation.

4.4 SAIVA SIDDHANTA

Saiva siddhanta is Tamil school of Saiva religion and philosophy which gained popularity and accepted to be one of the Indian systematic philosophical schools. Regarding the Saiva literature in Tamil, the following is the list of devotional literature that are called *panniru tirumurais.*

Literature	**Composed by**
Tevaram 1-3	St. Sambandhar
Tevaram 4-6	St. Tirunavukkarasar
Tevaram 7	St. Sundarar
Tiruvacakam	St. Manickavacakar
Tiruvisaippa and *Tiruppallandu*	Few saints like Senthanar, Karuvurthevar
Tirumandiram	St. Tirumular
11th Tirumuari	Several saints like Karaikkal Ammaiyar, Nambiandar Nambi
Periyapuranam	Cekkizhar

The above literature exemplies the nature of devotion, Siva's gracious nature, the peripheral nature of the phenomenal world, worship of fellow devotees, biographies of the devotees and the significant features of Lord Siva etc. They too reveal performances of rituals, celebration of festivals, miracles, mantra, tantra, yantra, mystic experience, trials and tribulations by Lord Siva, the devotees' perseverance even during the times of penury etc., social, political religious, moral, aesthetic, psychological, spiritual, historical, geographical, archeological, musical, linguistic and metaphysical realms are very well portrayed in these texts.

The philosophical treatises are fourteen in number and they are commonly known as Siddhanta Sastras or Meikanta Sastras which are as follows

Text	**Author**
Tiruvundhiyar	Uyyavandha Devar of Tiruviyalur
Tirukkalirruppadiyar	Uyyavandha Devar of Tirukkadavur`
Sivajnanabodham	Meikandar
Sivajnana Siddhiyar	Arulnandi Sivacaryar
Irupa Irupathu	Arulnandi Sivacaryar
Unmai Vilakkam	Manavacakam Kadantar
Sivappirakasam	Umapathi Sivacaryar
Kodikkavi	Umapathi Sivacaryar
Unmai Neri vilakkam	Umapathi Sivacaryar
Nenju Vidu Tutu	Umapathi Sivacaryar
Sankarpa Nirakaranam	Umapathi Sivacaryar
Tiruvarutpayan	Umapathi Sivacaryar
Vina Venba	Umapathi Sivacaryar
Porri pahrodai	Umapathi Sivacaryar

The first two works are the foremost treatises on Siva philosophy which elucidates the philosophical tenets of Saivism in a simple and lucid way. Sivjnanabodham is considered as the basic text which tives the quintessence of Saiva Siddhanta doctrines for which Sivajnanayogin has given an excellent commentary in the name of *Dravida Mapadiyam or Sivajnana Mapadiyam.* Arulnandi was the preceptor of Meikandar's father, but became Meikandar's disciple. His famous Sivajnana Siddhiyar follows the structure of his preceptor's work but adds the epistemology, *parapakkam,* (others' view) in his work. The rest of the works in the list brings out the implications of Sivajnanabodham with analogy, illustrations, critical notes etc. They contain a variety of themes as per the titles.

4.5 SIDDHANTA CONCEPT OF GOD AND SOUL

With regard to the doctrines of Saiva Siddhanta, it was Tirumular who gives a most but emphatic definition of the three realities. Among the three realities of Saivism known as *Pati*, *pasu* and *pasa*, *pasu* and *pasa* are as beginningless as *Pati*. The *pasa* which binds the *pasu* can seldom reach *Pati* and bind. But the moment *Pati* comes forwards, the *pasa* hitherto brinding the soul will be annihilated. As the impurities are eternal, seldom can they be destroyed, but they will lose their vitality and assist the souls in their pursuit for emancipation. This view has also been illustrated through the structure of Siva temple thus: the gracious Sivalinga in the *Sanctum* represent *Pati*; the bull outside the hall indicates *pasu* and the pulpit adjascent to the bull is a mark of *pasa*.

Pati or Siva is only one, but assumes several forms out of His bounteous grace. Actually He is formless in Himself, but takes several forms for the sake of His beloved devotees. Another unique factor about His existence is the state of form-formless (*ruparupa*) specifically known as the Sivalinga. It has a form such as the unique linga form and has no form like human or animal. This type of existence is meant for a common devotee to worship Him in the temples. Among the forms the famous ones are Nataraja, Daksinamurty, Piksadanar, Somaskandar, Kalyanasundarar etc. Of these Nataraja or the cosmic dance form is significant in the sense that it depicts the five-fold function of Lord Siva (*panca kritya*) viz., creation (*srsti*), preservation(*stiti*), destruction (*samhara*), concealment (*tirodhana*), and bestowal of grace (*anugraha*). Though each one is a distinct function all involve Grace. As Saiva Siddhanta subscribes to *satkaryavada,* (the effect is already in the cause), Lord Siva is the efficient cause (*nimita karana*), His consort or *sakti* is the instrumental cause (*upadana karana*) and *maya* is the material cause. According to Saiva Siddhanta, 'whatever exists will never vanish and whatever does not exist will never emerge.' So from the subtle level the gross world has been created for the sake of the souls to work out their salvation (*tanu* - body; *karana* – instruments of knowledge; *bhuvana* – earth and *boga* – enjoyment.)

Siva is recognized and revered as a passive Lord while His consort or *sakti* is an active principle. She is none other than the female aspect of Siva's grace and to substantiate their inseparable nature Siva has united Her on His left side and is known as *arthanarisvara murti.* Siva is also viewed as omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient God. He is both transcendent and immanent. He manifests as the five elements besides the sun, moon and the soul (*astamurtha*) – eight-fold manifestation. He is the very embodiment of pure love and is the very nature of grace. Though He transcends human comprehension, He is very accessible to the souls. His form is effulgence, the inner light (*atmajyoti*).

Siddhanta Concept of Soul

The soul or *pasu* which is pure in essence is unable to be so because of the enslavement by the impurities especially the ego (*ananva*). It has been sandwiched

between the Holy God and the horrible world. Hence it undergoes transmigration due to the impact of *karmas*. The Siddhantins put forth several arguments for the existence of the self other than the body, sense organs, mind, internal organs etc. It has three levels of existence such as *kevalavasta* (disembodied state); *sakalavasta*(embodied state) and *suddhavasta* (liberated state). In the first state in the absence of body, mind etc. it is like an eyeless child lying in a dark cave suffering due to *anava.* In the second state it is given a body due to *karmas* and undergoes by levels of experience viz., waking (*jagrat*), dream (*swapna*), deep sleep (*susupti*), the fourth (*turiya*), beyond the fourth (*turiyatita*). Also if the soul is entangled with all the three impurities, it is known as *sakalar;* if it has two impurities, it is *pralayakalar* and with one impurity, *anava* alone, it is known as *vijnanakalar.* The soul is also known as *sadasat. Sat* when it is in the company of God and His devotees and becomes *asat* in the company of *asat* (impermanent world). It is the soul which suffers in bondage and enjoys the bliss of Siva through His grace in the state of liberation.

4.6 SIDDHANTA CONCEPT OF BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

Anava, as an ontological and eternal entity observes the intelligence of the self completely and in association with *karma* and *maya* partially. To the question why there should be *anava,* the siddhantin replies that if there is no such thing called *anava,* the sols would be eternally in a state of pleasant consciousness without knowing what is suffering at all. Hence there is no possibility of realizing the efficacy of Siva's grace and emancipation as well. It has been described as the prime evil or dark evil. It is worst than darkness, for darkness will reveal not the objects, but itself, whereas *anava* will not reveal itself and make the persons affected by it reveal. Hence it is obligatory for a saivite always to check and control the emergence of *anava* and always promote God-consciousness than self-centredness.

Karma is the repurcursions of the deeds executed by the souls with personalistic motivation. They are classified as stored up karmas, *sancita,* accumulated karmas, *agamiya,* and fructifying karmas, *prarabdha.* In fact karma becomes the cause for births and re-births. By the invitation of the guru with divine grace, the *sancita karma* is burnt, the *agamic karma* will not be accumulated and the *prarabdha karma* will affect the body and vanish like an arrow sent out of the bow. In fact *karma* and *maya* are beneficial to the soul in making it moving towards God, but due to the influence of *anava,* they too become detrimental to the soul in binding. *Maya* is the matrix of the universe and the material cause of the world which is real. From *maya* the world has been created by the grace of Siva and unto the same the world resolves during dissolution. *Maya* has a three-fold classification, *suddhamaya, asuddha maya* and *prakrti or suddhasuddha maya.* From *suddhamaya* five *suddha tattvas* emerge. Likewise from *asuddhamaya,* seven *vidya tattvas,* and from *suddhasuddhamaya*, twentyfour *atma tattvas.* Hence Saiva siddhanta subscribes to thirtysix *tattvas.*

Liberation is made possible by realizing the grace of Siva through wisdom by resolving to the following steps:

Path	Relationship	Attainment	Example
Carya	Master-servant, *dasamarga*	*Saloka*	St. Appar
Kriya	Father-son, *satputra marga*	*Samipya*	St. Sambandhar
yoga	Friend-Friend, *Saha marga*	*Sarupya*	St.Sundarar
jnana	Master-Disciple, *Sanmarga*	*Sayujya*	St. Manickavacakar

All these pathways to liberation are not mutually exclusive, but inclusive. Ultimately there are sixteen paths. To sanctify the body the holy ashes and the holy beads serve as the sascred symbols while the five lettered holy syllabus, *pancaksara mantra,* serve as a spiritual resource to strengthen the soul. The invitation of the guru will expel divine darkness and infuse divinity into the seekers after release. The equilibrium of the twofold deed, *iruvinaioppu,* will make the impurities lose powers and the descent of divine grace becomes imminent, *saktinipada.*

Saiva siddhanta subscribes to *jivamukti,* since in this birth itself the vitality of egoity in binding the soul is transformed to feel proud as the member of Siva's close devotees. No *karmas* will get accumulated since all actions are executed in the name of and for the sake of Siva. *Maya* will seldom affect since the eyes are opened, but would be blind to the luring of material objects. As all the three impurities are transformed towards Siva's aspirations, the soul gets united with Siva and after entering into the state of illumination and enlightenment it enjoys the unalloyed bliss of Siva abundantly.

4.7 SOURCES OF VAISHNAVA RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Like Saivism, Sri Vaisnavism also is a philosophy of religion which has been included as one among the sects of Hinduism having Mahavishnu as the Supreme God. As religion it has its source of inspiration from the Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Puranas in Sanskrit and the devotional utterances of the Alvars in Tamil. The Upanisads and Bhagavat Gita and the Brahmasutras and the three major vedantic texts have been commented upon by Ramanuja in the realm of Visistadvaita philosophy. In the Hindu pantheon Vishnu has been recognized and adored as the God meant for protecting the human beings. However, the Vaishnaites comprehend Vishnu as the Ultimate God who is above these triple functions of creation, preservation and destruction, but at the same time as an immanent Being He is responsible for these functions. God is also named as Srimath Narayanan and in Tamil Tirumal.

In the Tamil vaisnavite tradition, we have the compilation of 4000 verses in the name of *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*, composed by the twelve ardent admirers of Vishnu by name Alvars. They have poured out their vibrant experiences in mellifluous terms wherein they depict the nature and characteristic feature of Mahavisnu in a manifold ways. Also they point out the disastrous nature of the worldly phenomena and the significant role of *bhakti* in uniting with God. The saints also elucidate a variety of devotion, but ultimately a devotee has to totally surrender to God to become the recipient of His Grace. The Vedas declare it is not possible to comprehend the personality as well as qualities of God while the experience of Brahman is possible, *yato vacate vartate.* But the Alvars who have been incarnated to give the quintessence of the Vedic message in Tamil assert the essential qualities of Visnu as the person having immeasurable high qualities. He also removes the impurities in the human minds and grants salvation through wisdom. By the grace of Lord Visnu the Alvar saints were born to praise His glory with divine fervour under the following categories: They have the joy of melodies. They have the hailing verses. They have the songs with internal meaning. They have the songs exposing the implied meaning of the Vedas. The have the songs depicting God as a child. They have the songs highlighting hero-heroine type of songs. They have songs with description of nature. They have the songs which awakes the Lord from His yogic slumber. They have the songs which glorify the incarnations of God.

The following is the list of Alvar Saints and the title of their hymns.

Poyhai Alvar	*Iyarpa*
Bhutattu Alvar	*Iyarpa*
Pey Alvar	*Iyarpa*
Tirumazhisai Alvar	*Tiruceanda Viruttam* and *Nanumkan Tiruvandati*
Nammalvar	Tiruvaimozhi
Madhurakal Alvar	*Kanninun Siruttambu*
Kulasekara Alvar	*Permal Tirumozhi*
Periyalvar	*Tiruppallandu, Periyalvar Tirumozhi*
Andal	*Tiruppavai, Nacciyar Tirumozhi*
Tondar Adippodi Alvar	*Tirumalai Tiruppalliyezhucci*
Tiruppan Alvar	*Amalan Adipiran*
Tirumangai Alvar	*Periya Tirumozhi, Tiruyezhukkurriryjjaum, Siriya Tirumadal, Periya Tirumadal.*

As per convention, in Vaishnavism also Lord Mahavisnu has been revered as the first acarya who has revealed the philosophical doctrines, *sastras* and instructed His disciples with the eight lettered mantra. The acaryas not only promoted *bhakti* but also promulgated the Vedantic Philosophy from a theistic perspective. Sankara's monistic and absolutistic philosophy has been replayed by the qualified non-dualism of

Ramanuja which is also known as Visistadvaita. (Refer the unit on Visistadvaita for the details.) The following is the list of acaryas of Sri Vaishnavism: Sri Nadamunigal, Sri Alavandar, Sri Tirukkacci Nambigal, Sri Ramanujar, Koorathalvar, Sri Vedanta Desikar and Sri Manavala Mamunigal. Sri Vedanta Desikar founded the northern tradition of Vaishnavism, while Sri Manavala Mamunigal established the southern tradition. Based on the adaptation of language, practices, customs and modes of worship this distinction was made.

The epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata speak about the birth and human activities of Lord Visnu as Rama and Krishna respectively. Thought they represent the royal class by birth, these avatars illustrate the truth regarding *dharma* at all spheres of life and of eliminating the evil forces. In the Bhagavat Gita , a classical philosophical text appearing in the Mahabharata, it is stated through the mouth of Lord Krishna that he would incarnate through out the *yugas,* eras, to protect the righteous people and to wipe out the wicked ones. The main ambit of these texts is that man ought to live according to the *purusharathas* (human values). We have also the Tamil Version of the Ramayana, *Kamba Ramayanam,* and Mahabharata, *Sri Villiputhurar Bharatam,* written according to the Tamil tradition, but without altering the tempo of the thematic contents. Through drama, dance, paintings, carving etc., the focal themes of these epics hasve been passed on to the people so as to enable them to lead a virtuous and pious life. In fact the Bhagavat Gita speaks about *karma yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga* and *jnana yoga* with special reference to *niskama karma* and *svadharma,* (desireless action and one's own duty). Besides the major scholars of vedantic schools such as Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva, the contemporary scholars like Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Arurobindo, Gandhi and others too have made extensive commentaries to this grand text which gives room for several interpretations from philosophical perspectives.

In Vaishnava religion has its unique religious scripture known as the Agamas, particularly called as the *pancaratna agamas* or *samhitas* which deliberately deal with the section of wisdom, *jnana,* Concentration, *yoga,* devotional activities, *kriya* worship, *carya.* Especially the vaishnava tradition upholding the authority of Ramanuja treat the *pancaratra Agamas* as the authoritative sources and sacred text. The philosophy of Vaishnavism commences from the *purusa-sukta* of the Rig Veda. Actually it lays the foundation of Visistadvaita. Only by performing sacrifice prescribed by the *pancaratra,* Narayana became the Great God, the Lord of the Universe – both transcendent and immanent, according to the *Satapatha Brahmana.* A few Vaishnava Upanishads such as *Avyakta Upanishad, Krisha Upanishad, Naryana Upanishad, Gopalataini Upanisad etc.* also speak high of the supremacy of Vishnu and highlight the philosophy of Vaishnavism known as Visistadvaita.

4.8 VAISHNAVA EPISTEMOLOGY AND METAPHYSICS

As far as its epistemology is concerned this system recognizes only three *pramanas, viz.,* Perception, inference and verbal testimony. It rejects altogether the indeterminate

perception as a psychological myth. Ramanuja agrees with the Nyaya system regarding inference as a *pramana*. Regarding verbal testimony he makes a compromise between Sankara's advaita and Mimamsa that both *karma* and *jnana* are to be equally treated as valid since the former is concerned with the methods of worship while the latter, the knowledge of personal God. Knowledge always has attributes and is self-luminous, but not self-conscious. His theory of error is known as *sat-khyati,* or *yatarthakhyati,* i.e. error is real. Since all knowledge is intrinsically valid.

In Metaphysics, this system rejects the attributeless Brahman, but considers Brahman as having all auspicious qualities and no evil or bad quality. Taking clues form the three vedantic texts, viz., Gita, Brahmasutra and Upanisads, Ramanuja endeavours to establish a theistic trend in the philosophy. Since he could not ignore the subject matter of the *Agamas,* it was possible for him to maintain religious views in his philosophical wisdom. Since Nirguna Brahman has been replayed by a qualified Absolute, Viz., God, it was easy for him to introduce two dependent realities, vis., *cit* and *acit* – the conscious beings and non-conscious things. Even as the body forms the substratum for the soul to exist, these two realities form the body to God who is their soul. He is present in them and at the same time controls them, *antaryamin.* God is endowed with three qualities viz., *sat, cit, ananda* – Existence, knowledge and bliss and He is truth, goodness and beauty as well.

4.9 VAISHNAVA CONCEPT OF GOD AND SOUL

Of all the Puranas, which speak about the grandeur of Visnu's gracious deeds, *Visnupuranam* has been considered as a great one. The Vaisnava religion and philosophy have received several sources of inspiration from this *purana*. This work exemplifies the five-fold nature of existence of Visnu such as Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Antaryamin and Arca. Para means Vyapaka, the state of existence as all pervasive and extending grace. It is like the rain-water pouring out in all parts of the world. He dwells in the Holy Land of Paramapada and adorns as sovereign monarch. Vyuha means surmounting in the universe with a form especially the form of yogic slumber at the ocean of milk. He becomes the prime object of worship for every month in the names of Kesavan, Narayanan, Madhavan, Govindan, Vishnu, Madhusudhanan, Trivikraman, Vamanan, Sridharan, Rishikesan, Padmanabhan and Dhamodharan. Vibhava means appearing in human form like the flowing water in a river. In order to alleviate the afflictions of His affectionate devotees He assumes several avatars. Mahavisnu's avatars are stated below.

Maccavatar	Fish
Kurumavatar	Turtle
Varaha Avatar	Pig
Narasimha avatar	Lion-Man
Vamana	Dwarf
Parasuraman	First Rama
Dasarata Raman	Rama of Ramayana

Sri Krishna	Dhamodharan of Mahabharata
Balarama	Later Raman
Kalki avatar (yet to come)	Kalki

Antaryamin is like the water beneath the earth, He bestows His grace in a concealed manner. Right from Brhama, upto the ant He conceals Himself as their inner controller and activates them. Finally Archavatar is like the water in the pond. Vishnu's idols are adored in the temples in several distinct forms, mainly for promoting devotion among the masses and strengthen the notion of surrender among His devotees He is installed in the form of idols in the temples.

The soul is an attribute of God and not identical with Him. It is a spiritual substance but eternal substance since it is neither created not destroyed. But is is finite and has individuality. It is the knower (*jnata),* agent of action *(karta)*, and an enjoyer (*bhokta*). As its knowledge is obscured by *karmas,* bondage takes place and in liberation all the *karmas* are annihilated due to deeper devotion and total surrender and wisdom emerges as to enjoy its *dharma bhuta jnana.* Both increasing love, infite knowledge and everlasting bliss constitute the nature of liberation. The following is the relationship between God and Soul in Visistadvaita thought:

1. *Sarira-Sariri bhava:* Soul is the body and God is its soul
2. *Amsa-Amsi bhava:* Soul is the part and God is the whole
3. *Sesa-Sesi bhava:* Soul is the means and God is the end
4. *Nayaka-Nayaki bhava:* Soul is the lover and God is the beloved
5. *Adhara-Adheyi bhava:* Soul is the supported and God is the supporter
6. *Niyramya-Niyamita bhava:* Soul is the controlled and God is the controller
7. *Prakara-Prakari bhava:* Soul is the mode and God is the substance

There are three kinds of souls, viz., ever free souls (*nitya muktas*), always in bondage (*buddhas*) and the released souls (*muktas*). In order to overcome bondage Visistadvaita basically insists upon promoting pure love towards God and through the grace of God the soul attains liberation. Through sevenfold argument known as *saptavita anupapatti,* Ramanuja rejects the conception of *maya* as envisaged and exemplified by Sankara as *anirvacaniya* etc. and considers it as the special power of God in creating the universe. In liberation the soul does not merge with Brahman who is *Nirguna* etc., but retains its individual identity and enjoys the holy company of God for ever. Thus a thorough going theistic philosophy has been maintained by the Vaishnava philosophy.

4.10 LET US SUM UP

Both Saiva and Vaishna religions are as old as Vedic religion in India. They accepted the Vedic scriptures and integrated them in their own. Systematic philosophies emerged out of these religions when they had a revival during the medieval period as

bhakti movements. Saiva Siddhanta and Visistadvaita are the prominent philosophical systems of these two religions.

4.11 KEY WORDS

Avatar ***:*** Vaishna concept of God taking different forms with specific purpose.

Satkaryavada **:** General Indian principle of causality that the effect pre-exists in the cause.

Antaryamin **:** Vaishna concept of God as indweller

4.12 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Heehs, Peter. Ed. *Indian Religions: The Spiritual Traditions of South Asia.* Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003.

Singh H. *An Introduction to Indian Religions.* Patiala: Punjabi University, 1973.

Block 5

INDIAN SYSTEMATIC PHILOSOPHY

IGNOU

Prof. George Panthanmackel,

Senior Consultant, IGNOU

Dr. M. R. Nandan

Govt. College for Women

Mandya - Mysore

Dr. Kuruvila Pandikattu

Jnana-deepa Vidyapeeth

Ramwadi,

Pune

Dr Babu Joseph

CBCI Centre

New Delhi

Prof. Tasadduq Husain

Aligarh Muslim University

Aligarh

Dr. Bhuvaneswari

Lavanya Flats

Gangai Amman Koil St.

Thiruvanmiyur

Chennai – 600 041

Dr. Alok Nag

Vishwa Jyoti Gurukul

Varanasi

Dr. Jose Kuruvachira

Salesian College & IGNOU Study Centre

Dimapur, Nagaland

Dr. Sathya Sundar Sethy

Dept of Humanities

IIT, Chennai.

Dr. Joseph Martis

St. Joseph's College Jeppu, Mangalore – 2

Dr. Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon

147, Kabir park

Opp. GND University

Amristar – 143 002

Prof. Y.S. Gowramma

Principal,

College of Fine Arts,

Manasagangotri

Mysore – 570 001

Block Preparation

Unit 1	Dr. Shyamala Payannur, Kannur, Kerala
Unit 2	Dr. L. Vijai Government College, Tiruvanthapuram.
Unit 3	Bruno Baptist Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune.
Unit 4	Dr. S. Bhuvaneswari Tiruvanmiyur, Chennai.

Content Editor

Dr. V. John Peter

IGNOU, New Delhi

Format Editor

Prof. Gracious Thomas

IGNOU, New Delhi.

Programme Coordinator

Prof. Gracious Thomas

IGNOU, New Delhi.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Logic is the study of inference and argument. Epistemology is the study of the origin, nature and limits of human knowledge. The logic and theory of knowledge of Indian systems are largely coloured by their metaphysical tenets. The central questions of epistemology include the origin of knowledge, the place of experience in generating knowledge and the place of reason in doing so; the relationship between knowledge and the responsibility of error and changing forms of knowledge that arise from new conceptualisations of the world. Metaphysics as a theory of reality raises profound questions about the nature of matter, life, mind, God, space, time, numbers, of causation, freedom and fate, and of objects and events. It is not possible to speak of Indian Metaphysics in the singular. Each school of Indian Philosophy has developed a distinct metaphysical view that is consistent with its epistemology and ethics. The motive of metaphysical thinking in the Indian tradition has been practical and not merely theoretical. Specialty of Indian philosophical thinking is that rational enquiry does not aim only at abstract speculation about reality but is done with practical insights for everyday living. All schools of Indian philosophy ends their philosophical discussions with moral injunctions to perfect one's own personal life and to create a healthy and a peaceful society. Indian Aesthetics is a witness to the fine and subtle philosophical exposition of Indian masters.

Unit 1 makes the students know about the system of logic in Indian thought and of the different means of knowledge accepted in the different schools of Indian thought. Every classical Indian systems deal with logic, the object of knowledge (*prameya*), the means of valid knowledge (*Pramana*), the resultant of valid knowledge (*prama*). This unit focuses on the discussion on various means of knowledge accepted or rejected by different schools.

Unit 2 provides a sketch of Indian Metaphysical theories of different schools. This unit looks into the fundamental questions raised and answered by Indian metaphysics and outlines its conceptual structure. It will provide a comprehensive account of Indian Materialism, Realism, Dualism, Pluralism, Idealism and Absolutism of different schools of Indian tradition.

Unit 3 on 'Indian ethics' is a short survey of the ethical foundation of Hindu religious philosophy and of other philosophical schools like Buddhism, Jainism and Carvaka. The essential Buddhist and Jaina ethics consist in *Pancasila* and *Pancamahavrata*. Vedic ethics gives emphasis on the individual morality in terms of societal well being. However, Carvaka ethics focus on life of happiness and pleasure here on earth upholding materialistic and physical aspects.

Unit 4 studies the origin and development of Indian Aesthetics as art appreciation and experience. It expounds various theories of Aesthetics from the written sources on aesthetics with the contemporary discussion on the philosophical implications of aesthetic theories.

UNIT 1 LOGIC AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Contents

1.0 OBJECTIVES

Logic is the study of inference and argument. Epistemology is the study of the origin, nature and limits of human knowledge. The main objective of this unit is to give details of logic and epistemology in the different systems of Indian Philosophy. The logic and theory of knowledge of Indian systems are largely coloured by their metaphysical tenets. This unit is concerned with the sources, nature, validity and limits of man's knowledge. It also deals with the theories of truth and logic and their relevance in the different schools of Indian thought. By the end of this unit you will have a clear cut idea

* of basic understanding of the theories of knowledge;
* to relate it with the theories of truth and error;
* to know about the system of logic in Indian thought;
* of the different means of knowledge accepted in the different schools of Indian thought;
* of the validity and invalidity of knowledge as given in the schools of Indian thought.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The central questions of epistemology include the origin of knowledge, the place of experience in generating knowledge and the place of reason in doing so; the relationship between knowledge and the responsibility of error and changing forms of knowledge that arise from new conceptualisations of the world. All of these issues link with other central concerns of Indian systems. There are four factors involved in any knowledge

(1) The subject who knows (*pramata*)

(2) the object of knowledge (*prameya*)

(3) the means of valid knowledge (*Pramana*)

(4) the resultant of valid knowledge (*prama*)

Prama is valid knowledge. Knowledge can be valid or invalid; valid knowledge is called *prama* and non-valid knowledge is known as *aprama*. *Pramana* is valid means of knowledge and its important four means include perception (*pratyaksa*), inference (*anumana*), verbal testimony (*sabda*), and comparison (*upamana*). Different schools of Indian thought accept or reject different ones of these methods. All methods are accepted by Mimamsa; only perception, inference and testimony by Yoga; only perception and inference by Buddhism and Vaisesika; and only perception by Carvaka.

Indian theories of knowledge are divisible into two - *Svatahpramanya vada* (self validity of knowledge) and *Paratahpramanya vada*. In the former view knowledge is intrinsically valid. Error occurs only when some outside factors affect it. In the latter case, knowledge by itself is neither valid nor invalid. Its truth or falsity is to be ascertained through some appropriate test.

The general science of inference is logic and its aim is to make explicit the rules by which inferences are drawn. Inferences are rule-governed steps from one or more propositions known as premises, to another proposition, called conclusion. A deductive inference is one that is intended to be valid, where a valid inference is one in which the conclusion must be true if the premises are true. All other inferences are inductive. Hence we can say that logic is the art or philosophy of reasoning. We will be having a detailed study of these concepts of logic and epistemology, introduced above in the context of Indian systems in this unit.

1.2 CARVAKA EPISTEMOLOGY

According to the Carvaka school, *pratyaksa* or perception is the only source of knowledge; i.e., what cannot be perceived through the senses must be treated as non-existent. They refute all other sources of knowledge. They admit only four elements; i.e., earth, water, air and fire. We experience all the four through perception. So, perception is the only authority. There is no space because we cannot perceive any such element. The world of common sense perception is the only world that exists. Again, the physical body is the self of an individual. There is no mind, no consciousness, no soul, over and above the physical body. We do not perceive mind or soul. Hence they are unreal. Even consciousness is a by-product and epiphenomenon of matter. “Matter secretes mind as liver secretes bile.” A particular

combination of elements produces consciousness though the elements separately do not possess it. It is similar to the red colour being produced from the combination of betel leaf, areca nut and lime, none of which is red.

The validity of inference is also rejected by Carvakas. Inference is said to be a mere leap into the dark. We proceed here from the known to the unknown and there is no certainty in this, though some inferences may turn out to be accidentally true. A general proposition may be true in unperceived cases. But there is no guarantee that it will hold true even in unperceived cases. Deductive inferences is vitiated by the fallacy of *petitio principii*. It is merely an argument in circle since the conclusion is already contained in the major premise, the validity of which is not proved. Inductive inference undertakes to prove the validity of the major premise of deductive inference. But induction too is uncertain because it proceeds unwarrantedly from the known to the unknown. In order to distinguish true induction from simple enumeration, it is pointed out that the former, unlike the latter, is based on casual relationship which means invariable association or *Vyapti*. *Vyapti*, therefore is the nerve of all inference. But the Carvaka challenges this universal and invariable relationship of concomitance and regards it a mere guess work. Perception does not prove this *Vyapti*. Nor can it be proved by inference, for inference itself is said to presuppose its validity. Testimony too cannot prove it, for testimony itself is not a valid means of knowledge. Secondly, if testimony proves *Vyapti*, inference would become dependent on testimony and then none would be able to infer anything by himself. Hence inference cannot be regarded as a valid source of knowledge. Induction is uncertain and deduction is argument in a circle. The logicians therefore find themselves stuck up in mud of inference.

The Carvaka position has been vehemently criticised by all systems of Indian philosophy all of which have maintained the validity of at least perception and inference. To refuse the validity of inference from the empirical standpoint is to refuse to think and discuss. All thoughts, all discussions, all doctrines, all affirmations and denials, all proofs and disproofs are made possible by inference. The Carvaka view that perception is valid and inference is invalid is itself a result of inference. Carvaka can understand others only through inference and make others understand him only through inference. Thoughts and ideas not being material objects cannot be perceived but can only be inferred.

1.3 JAINA LOGIC AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Jains have also critically examined the valid sources of knowledge. According to Jainism knowledge is of two kinds-*Pramana* and *Naya*. *Pramana* refers to the knowledge of a thing as it is. *Naya* is that particular standpoint from which we deliver our judgement about a particular thing. Both *Pramana* and *Naya* are essential for the full and true knowledge of a thing. *Pramana* is that knowledge which illuminates itself and others without any hindrance. Hence Jains classify knowledge gained through *Pramana* into direct (*aparoksa*) and indirect (*paroksa*).

Direct knowledge:- *Avadhi-jnana, Manah paryaya* and *kevala jnana* are three kinds of direct knowledge which may be called extra-ordinary, and extra-sensory perceptions. *Avadhi* is clarivoyance, *Manah paryaya* is telepathy, and *kevala* is omniscience. *Avadhi* is direct knowledge of things even at a distance of space or time. It is called *Avadhi* or limited because it functions within a particular area and up to a particular time. It cannot go beyond s*Pati*al and temporal limits. *Manah paryaya* is direct knowledge of the thought of others. This too is limited by s*Pati*al and temporal conditions. In both *Avadhi* and *Manah paryaya*, the soul has direct knowledge unaided by the senses or the mind. Hence they are called immediate, though limited. *Kevala-jnana* is unlimited and absolute knowledge. It can be acquired only by liberated souls. It is not limited by space, time or object.

Indirect knowledge:- Perceptual knowledge which is ordinarily called immediate, and admitted to be relatively so by Jainism and therefore included in mediate knowledge. Pure perception in the sense of mere sensation cannot rank the title of knowledge. It must be given meaning and arranged into order by conception or thought. Perceptual knowledge is therefore regarded as mediate since it presupposes the activity of thought. Mediate knowledge is divided into *mati* and *shruta*. *Mati* includes both perceptual and inferential knowledge. *Mati jnana* springs in the following order:

(1) *Avagraha*-is the first kind of knowledge produced from the contact of sense organs with the objects.

(2) *Iha*-This follows *avagraha* and in it the soul is able to appreciate the qualities of the visible object.

(3) *Avaya*-In this we come to know definitely about the object

(4) *Dharand*-In this, the full knowledge about the object leaves an impression upon the mind of man.

Shruta jnana means knowledge derived from authority. It is to be gained from authoritative books and words of great sages. Perusal of authoritative books and listening to the sermons of saints are essential for this kind of knowledge. *Shruta jnana* is divided into two categories, i.e., *Angavahya* and *angapravistha*. The former is mentioned in the Jaina scriptures while the *shruta jnana* outside the pale of the religious books of the Jains, fall in the latter category. Thus *Mati* and *Shruta* which are the two kinds of mediate knowledge have as their instrument perception, inference and authority- the three *Pramana*s admitted by Jainism.

According to Jaina epistemology indirect knowledge is of five kinds-*Smrti, Pratyabhijna, Tarka, Anumana* and *Agama.*

(1) *Smrti*- To reminisce something known directly in the past as a result of the awakening of some *samskara* is known *sruti*. For Jains, *smrti* is valid knowledge because it is the correct form of things perceived in the past.

(2) Recognition (*pratyabhijna*)- It is the synthetic knowledge contributed by direct perception and recollection (*Smrti*).In it we know resemblance (*samanata*), identity (*tadatmya*), differences (*bheda*), comparison (*Tulana*),etc. In it we know the general (*samanya*) in the form of similar change (*sadrsaparinama*) of different *jivas* and *ajivas*. Recognition is valid knowledge.

(3) Logic (*Tarka*)- It is the knowledge of *Vyapti* between *paksa* and *sadhya*.It depends upon the perception whether two things exist together or not in the past, present, and future. *Vyapti* is of two kinds-- *Anavya Vyapti* and *Vyatireka Vyapti*. In the former the concomitance of two tings is established. In the latter *Vyapti* is shown in the absence. 'where there is fire, there is smoke' is an example of *Anavaya Vyapti*. On the other hand.' where there is no fire, there is smoke', exemplifies *Vyatireka Vyapti*. The relationship of universal accompaniment, gradual or concurrent, exists in *Vyapti*. This relationship is ascertained by logic (*Tarka*).

(4) Inference (*anumana*)-It is the knowledge of *sadhya* with the help of *hetu*. This inference is either *svarthanumana* or *pararthanumana*. The former is the grasp for one's own self. Hence it needs no amplification. For example, the frequent visibility of fire under smoke together suffices to convince us of their concomitance. Afterwards, when we see smoke, we infer the existence of fire also with the help of *Vyapti*, which is already known to us. It is, *svarthanumana*. In it the place of smoke is *paksa*, smoke is *paksa dharma*. In *svarthanumana* both *Vyapti* and *paksa dharma* are essential. *Pararthanumana* is used for convincing others. So it must be more systematised and vivid. It is fivefold. In the fivefold *Pararthanumana* an inference is drawn in five sentences. These sentences are called the propositions (*avayava*) of inference; e.g.,

(a) *Pratijna*-The hill is fiery;

(b) *Hetu*-because of smoke;

(c) *Drstanta*- Wherever there is smoke there is fire, such as in the kitchen;

(e) *Upanaya*- The smoke, which does not exist without fire (*Vyaptivisistdhum*) is in the hill;

(f) *Nigamana*-Therefore the hill is fiery;

(5) *Agama*:- It is the knowledge of a thing through the words of reliable people. A person who knows things in their true form and expresses his views correctly, is a reliable person and an *apta*. He is free from prejudice. His words befit the object which they are seeking to express. *Agama* is of two kinds-*Laukik* and *Alaukik*.

Naya vada

Naya means a standpoint of thought from which we make a statement about a thing. All truth is relative to our standpoints. Partial knowledge of one of the innumerable aspects of a thing is called '*Naya*'. Judgement based on this partial knowledge is also included in '*Naya*'. There are seven *nayas* of which the first four are called *artha-Naya* because they relate to objects or meanings and the last three are called *shabda Naya* because they relate to words. When taken as absolute, a '*Naya*' becomes a fallacy or *nayabhasa.*

Syad Vada

Syad vada or *saptabhangi Naya* is the most important part of Jaina logic. According to this, we can know only some aspects of reality and so all our judgements are relative. It is a theory of the relativity of knowledge. Therefore, the knowledge of every object is not absolute but relative and *Syad vada* holds all knowledge to be only probable. Every proposition gives us only a perhaps, a may be or a *Syad*. We cannot affirm or deny any thing absolutely of any object. There is nothing certain on account of the endless complexity of things. It emphasises the extremely complex nature of reality and its indefiniteness.

Reality has infinite aspects and we can know only some of these aspects. The infinitely complex reality admits of opposite predicates from different standpoints. It is real as well as unreal. It is universal as well as particular. It is one as well as many. Viewed from the point of view of substance, a thing is real, universal permanent and one. Viewed from the point of view of modes, it is unreal, particular, momentary and many. Those who ignore this truth make simple and unqualified statements about reality. Jains are very fond of quoting the story of the blind men and the elephant. The blind men gave different accounts of the elephant. They are right in what they affirmed, but wrong in what they denied. There is no judgement which is absolutely true and no judgement is absolutely false. All our judgements are relative, conditional and limited. The statements 'exists and does not exists' may be made from different standpoints. Each is true. The stand from which a thing is known is called '*Naya*'. It is this principle of standpoint (*Naya*) that is made known through the theory of 'may be ism' (*Syad Vada*). It consists of seven steps. Each judgement is meaningful, only if the standpoint from which it is made is taken into account. This is done by adding the expression 'may be' or *Syad* to the judgement. The seven steps are as follows:-

1. May be, a thing is (*Syad asti*);
2. May be, a thing is not (*Syad nasti*);
3. May be, a thing is and is not (*Syad asti nasti*);
4. May be, a thing is inexpressible (*Syad avaktavya*);
5. May be, a thing is and inexpressible (*Syad asti avaktavya*);
6. May be, a thing is not and is inexpressible (*Syad nasti avaktavya*);
7. May be, a thing is and is not and is inexpressible (*Syad asti nasti avaktavya*).

The significance of this doctrine is that our knowledge regarding any thing is relative. Relative knowledge presupposes absolute knowledge. Jainism accepts *Kevala jnana* as the absolute knowledge.

1.4 BUDDHIST EPISTEMOLOGY

In epistemological ideas also we can see the different opinions among the four schools of Buddhism, Yogacara, Madhyamika, Sautrantika, Vaibhasika. According to Sautrantika the external objects are not known through perception. According to

Vaibhasika, on the other hand, the knowledge of the external objects can also be gained through perception. The Vaibhasika philosophers have criticised the Sautrantika view regarding perception.

According to Vaibhasika the inference of things external to knowledge is self-contradictory. If all the external objects are inferred by their knowledge, then nothing can be known by perception. In the absence of perception there can be no relation of concomitance between the major and the minor premise without which no inference is possible. This is opposed to actual experience. The Vaibhasikas accept the presence of the external things and conceive them as subject to perception. According to Vaibhasika that is *Pramana* by which direct knowledge is possible. The *Pramana*s are two types: *Pratyaksa* (perception) and *anumana* (inferential). Both these *Pramana*s are known as *samyagjnana* (right knowledge) and it is by these that all the *purusharthas* are attained. *Pratyaksa* is the knowledge devoid of imagination and error. This knowledge is of four types:

(1) *Indriya jnana*—This is the knowledge attained through senses.

(2) *Mano vijnana*—in this knowledge there is the sensual knowledge in the form of *samanatara pratyaya* after the knowledge through senses. This *samanantara pratyaya* is a mental modification in the absence of which there is no knowledge even after continued seeing. Thus *mano vijnana* is born of both the object and the consciousness.

(3) *Atma samvedana*—It is the manifestation of *chitta* and its *dharmas* are like pleasure and pain in their real form. This is attributeless, without error and of the nature of self-realisation.

(4) *Yogic jnana*—It is the ultimate knowledge of the things perceptible through various *Pramana*s. The object of *pratyaksa* is *svalaksana*. *Svalaksana* is that object in which there is difference in the form of knowledge by the presence and absence of its contact. It is by it that a thing has the capacity to do anything. Hence it is said to be *paramartha satya*.

Inference is of two types: *Svartha* (for the self) and *parartha* (for others).In the former the *linga* is inferential, i. e., in the inference there is fire on the hill, the hill is *linga* and the fire is inferential. In it the *linga* remains in self side (*svapaksa*), just as the kitchen. The *linga* does not remain in the opposite side (*vipaksa*), e.g., a pool of water, etc.

Sautrantika School

According to Sautrantikas they are subject to inference. According to Sautrantikas there are four causes of knowledge.

(1) *Alamban*-It is the cause of external objects like jug etc, because the form of the knowledge is born from it.

(2) *Samanantara*—This is so called because it is only after the previous mental stage that the following stage attains consciousness.

(3) *Adhipat*—The senses have been called as the *Adhipati Pratyaya* of the knowledge. It is the normative cause. Without the senses there can be no external knowledge even after the presence of the first two causes.

(4) *Sahkari Pratyaya*—these are the subsidiary conditions necessary for knowledge, e.g., light, form, etc. without which knowledge becomes almost impossible.

The knowledge of the external objects becomes possible due to the above mentioned four causes or conditions. The Sautrantikas do not admit that the external objects have no existence and all knowledge is in the consciousness. Nor do they believe like the Vaibhasikas that we know anything by direct perception. As opposed to Vaibhasikas , the Sautrantikas maintain that we have no direct perception of the external objects but only the knowledge of their appearance. It is by the distinction in these appearances which are the basis of the knowledge. Hence they are in the mind itself, though the things which they represent as external objects are not known by their perception, but by the inference based upon the mental modifications aroused by them . This view is known as Bahayanumeyavad. It is representationalism or indirect realism.

Yogacara School

According to Yogacara the physical world has no existence apart from consciousness. Even if the existence of anything outside consciousness is admitted it cannot be known. Vijnanavadins believe that all things external to mind are mental modifications. Thus the knowledge of the external things is impossible. Hence the thing which appears to be external, should be taken as a mental concept. It can be questioned here that if the object is a mere concept of the mind why it does not appear, disappear and change as desired. To this the Vijnanavadins reply that the mind is a mere stream in which the past experiences remain in the form of expression and whenever there is favourable condition for a certain impression the same impression manifests and results into knowledge. From the multiple point of view Vijnanavadins admit two types of knowledge - *Grahana* and *Adhyavasaya*. *Grahana* is indirect and *Adhyavasaya* direct inference. The Vijnanavadins believe that the proof of things depends on something else. (*Parartah Pramanyavada*). They made two distinctions in the empirical truth – *Paratatra* and *Pari-kalpa*. The former is relative while the latter is imaginary.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. Examine the main contributions of Carvaka epistemology to Indian philosophy.

…..
....
....

....
....

2. Expound the Jain theory of *syad vada* and evaluate it as an epistemological theory.

…..
....
....
....
....

1.5 NYAYA-VAISESIKA EPISTEMOLOGY

In the Nyaya philosophy knowledge is spoken of as the manifestation of object. Knowledge lights its objects as does a lamp. Knowledge may be valid or invalid. Valid knowledge (*prama*) is defined as the right apprehension of an object. It is the manifestation of an object as it is. Nyaya maintains the theory of correspondence. While Nyaya system recognises all the four *Pramana*s namely perception, inference, verbal testimony and comparison, Vaisesika recognises only two *Pramana*s-perception and inference and reduces comparison and verbal testimony to inference.

Perception is divided into ordinary (*Laukika*) and extra-ordinary (*Alaukika*). In ordinary perception knowledge results from the contact of the sense organs with the external objects (*bahya*). Extraordinary perception has three distinctions - perception of classes (*samanyalaksna*), complication (*jnana laksnana*) and intuition (*yogaja*). The Naiyayika maintains two stages in perception- *Nirvikalpa* (indeterminate) and *Savikalpa* (determinate). Gautama accepts this distinction of perception.

According to Nyaya philosophy, the second source of valid knowledge is *anumana* . The term *anumana* literally means 'after-knowledge' i.e., knowledge that follows other knowledge. It is mediate and indirect and are arranged through the medium of some mark which is called '*hetu'* and bears the relation of invariable concomitance with the observed feature. The basis of the inference is invariable concomitance. The invariable relation between the *hetu* and the *sadya* is called *Vyapti*. The knowledge of the qualities of the '*paksa'* through the '*hetu'* is called *paramarsa*. Hence inference or *anumana* is said to be knowledge gained through *paramarsa*, or in other words, the knowledge of the presence of sadhya in the *paksa* through the *linga*, which is in the quality of *paksa* and is invariably related by *Vyapti*.

This may be explained with the help of the typical example of inference, the presence of fire on the perception of smoke. When one sees smoke on distant hill one remembers one's experience of the universal concomitance (*Vyapti*) between smoke and fire and concludes that there is fire on the distant hill. The character which is inferred (fire) is called sadhya; the mark on the strength of which the character is inferred is the *hetu* (smoke); the subject where the character is inferred is *paksa* (hill).

The three terms correspond to the major, the middle and the minor terms in the Aristotelian syllogism. The following is a a typical nyaya syllogism.

1. This hill has fire (*pratijna*),
2. Because it has smoke (*hetu*),
3. Whatever has smoke has fire e.g. an oven (*udaharana*),
4. This hill as smoke which is invariably associated with fire (*upanaya*),
5. Therefore this hill has fire (*nigamana*).

The first, the *pratijna*, is the logical statement which is to be proved. The second is *hetu* or reason which states the reason for the establishment of the proposition. The third is *udaharana* which the universal concomitance together with example. The fourth is *upanaya* or application of the universal concomitance to the present case. The fifth is *nigamana* or conclusion drawn from the preceding propositions. These five members of Indian syllogism are called *Avayavas*.

Linga paramarsa: The Nyaya syllogism has five terms. Among them ,middle term works as a bridge between the major and the minor terms. Therefore, the middle term has main responsibility to prove a syllogism valid or invalid. How a middle term is related to major term is *lingaparamarsha*. There are five characteristics of a middle term-

1. It must be present in the minor term (*paksadharmata*); e.g., smoke must be present in the hill.
2. It must be present in all positive instances in which the major terms is present; e.g., smoke must be present in the kitchen where fire exists.(*sapaksasattva*).
3. It must be absent in all negative instances in which the major terms is absent; e.g., smoke must be absent in the lake in which fire does not exist.(*vipaksasattva*).
4. It must be non-incom*Pati*ble with the minor term; e.g., it must not prove the coolness of fire (*abadhita*).
5. It must be qualified by the absence of counteracting reasons which lead to a contradictory conclusion; e.g., 'the fact of being caused' should not be used to prove the 'eternality' of sound (*aviruddha*).

***Hetvabhasa*:-**In Indian logic a fallacy is called *hetvahas*a**.** It means that middle term appears to be a reason but is not a valid reason. All fallacies are material fallacies. We have mentioned the five characteristics of a valid middle term. When these are violated, we have fallacies. Five kinds of fallacies are recognized:

1. *Assiddha or sadhyasama*- This is the fallacy of unproved middle.
2. *Savyabhicara*- this is the fallacy of irregular middle.
3. *Satpratipaksa*- here the middle term is contradicted by another middle term.
4. *Badhita*- It is the non-inferentially contradicted middle
5. *Viruddha*- It is the contradictory middle.

Comparison with Western Syllogism:-

There are many important points of difference of resemblances as well as difference between Nyaya syllogism and Aristotelian syllogism. The first we shall note the resemblances. Though the Nyaya syllogism has five and the Aristotelian syllogism as three propositions, the terms in both are only three-the *sadhya* or the major, the *paksa* or the minor and the *hetu* or the middle. The Nyaya syllogism can easily be converted into the usual Aristotelian syllogism. The first and the last propositions are the same. The second coincides with fourth. Hence if we leave out the first two members of the Nyaya syllogism, we find that it resembles the Aristotelian syllogism.

All things which have smoke have fire (Major).

This hill has smoke (Minor).

Therefore, this hill has fire (conclusion).

But there are certain real differences between the Nyaya and Aristotelian syllogism.

1. While Aristotle concentrates only on deduction the Nyaya system combines deduction with induction. The example is a special feature of the Nyaya syllogism and illustrates the truth that the universal major premise is the result of inductive reasoning. The Nyaya regards deduction and induction as inseparably related as two aspects of the same process. The third proposition shows that the universal proposition is derived from the particular instances like the oven. Such observation of particular instances is the work of induction. The third proposition where Nyaya combines the Universal with the particular brings out the inseparable connection between deduction and induction.
2. Again while the Aristotelian syllogism is formal, the Nyaya syllogism is formal as well as material. Nyaya syllogism discusses only facts of experience, since it has to suggest examples.

Classification of inference: Inference is twofold-(1) *Svarthanumana*-inference for one's own sake and (2) *Pararthanumana*-inference for the sake of others. The former is not expressed in the form of a syllogistic argument. The latter is a syllogism which helps to direct the mind of the listener to think in the required manner.

Sabda: It is defined as the statement of a trustworthy person (*aptavakya*) and consists in understanding its meaning. It is based on the words of trustworthy persons, human or divine. A person is trustworthy if he knows the truth and conveys it correctly. Testimony is of two kinds- Vaidika and secular (*laukika*). The *vaidika* testimony is perfect and infallible because the Vedas are spoken by God. Secular testimony, being the words of human beings who are liable to error, is not infallible.

Comparison (*Upamana*): It is knowledge derived from similarity. It has been defined as the knowledge of the relation between a word and its denotation.

1.6 SAMKHYA YOGA EPISTEMOLOGY

Samkhya theory of knowledge: In all knowledge three factors are involved.

(a) The subject who knows,

(b) The object known,

(c) The process of knowledge.

Samkhya admits of three *Pramana*s –perception, inference, and verbal testimony.

Perception: Samkhya believes in 'representative perception'. In knowledge the internal organ mediates the *purusa* and objects when an object comes within the range of vision, the internal organ is so modified as to assume the form of an object. The modification of the internal organ into an object is called *vrtti* or mode. Knowledge means that mode as illuminated by the light of *purusa*. Illumination is a constant feature of perceptual knowledge. The mode varies in accordance with the objects presented.

Inference: There are varieties of inference generally recognised. The first is syllogistic inference which is based on perception. The second corresponds to analogical reasoning in modern logic. Such inference is called *samanyatodrsta*. For e.g., From the observed fact that an effect like a jar requires for its production, an agent like potter, it is concluded that the world also should have been brought into existence by a competent being God.

***Sabda*:** It is interpreted as aptavacana. Testimony is valid if the source is reliable. It may come not only from the scriptures, but also from persons who are trust worthy (*apta*).

1.7 PURVA MIMAMSA EPISTEMOLOGY

According to Kumarila Bhatta, valid knowledge is that which provides the experience of an unknown object, that which is not contradicted by other knowledge and which is free from other defects. The Mimamsakas uphold *svatah pramanya vada* or self validity of knowledge. Knowledge is valid by itself. The conditions of freedom from defects and non-contradiction being satisfied, all knowledge arises as self-valid. Coherence and self-consistency is the nature of valid knowledge. Both Prabhakara and Kumarila regard knowledge itself as *Pramana* or means of knowledge. Jaimini admits three *Pramana*s - perception, inference and testimony. Prabhakara adds two more –comparison and implication. Kumarila further adds non-apprehension.

***Arthapathi* (presumption):-** Prabhakara and Kumarila both, admit *Arthapathi* as an independent means of valid kowledge. Through this *Pramana* we discover a fact as a result of a contradiction between two facts already known to be well established. A common example is - Devadutta does not take his food during day time. Yet he is quite strong and fat. We presume that he must be taking food at night. The assumption

of Devadutta eating at night is a postulation. We have never seen him eating his food at night. Hence the knowledge gained by postulation is not perception. This kind of knowledge is a peculiar or unique kind of knowledge and it has to be considered separately. But some Indian logicians bring this *Pramana* under inference-disjunctive inference.

All fat persons who do not eat during the day are persons who eat during the night.

Devadutta is a fat person who does not eat during the day

Therefore Devadutta is a fat person who eats during the night.

Anupalabdhi **(non-apprehension):-** *Anupalabdhi* is the immediate knowledge of the non-existence of object. Kumarila admits this but Prabhakara rejects it. It is related to the category of *abhava*. For e.g., an umbrella which is expected to be seen in a particular corner of a room is not seen there. We know about the non-existence of the umbrella through a separate *Pramana*, *anupalabdhi*. Nyaya, though it accepts non-existence as a category has no separate *Pramana* to understand it. According to them, the non-existence of an object can be known by perception itself as in the case of perceiving the bare floor. But according to Mimamsa since there is no sense object contact, we require a new *Pramana* to know the non-existence of an object. This is a unique feature of Mimamsa epistemology.

1.8 VEDANTA EPISTEMOLOGY

According to Vedanta, there are three *Pramana*s- Perception (*pratyksa*), Inference (*tarka*), and Scripture (*sruti*). **Perception:** In perception the subject and object become identical because in fact both are the same consciousness. The subject and the object remain separate due to the covering of ignorance. But by the direct union of Antakarana through the sense it takes the form of the object and shines in the form of that particular object illumined by the self due to the removal of the covering of ignorance. ***Tarka*** **(inference):** Inference is the knowledge which results by the past impressions based upon the awareness of concomitance. The awareness of concomitance leaves the impressions on the unconscious and when these impressions are awakened by perceiving that object again, the result is inference. Against Nyaya, Sankara admits only three premises of inference-*Pratijna*, *hetu* and *udaharana*. **Sruti or Scripture:-**According to advaita, God is the author of Veda in a special sense. It is not His work in the literal sense. Like everything else, Veda also disappears at the end of the cycle and God repeats it at the beginning of the next cycle. So far as its substance is concerned, it is independent of God, i.e., *Apurusya*. According to Nyaya, God is the sole author of Veda and according to Mimamsa, Vedas are self-existent. In advaita, we find a midway position between these two systems.

According to Ramanuja, all knowledge points to a complex or qualifies object. Knowledge never reveals anything as nirguna. According to Ramanuja, nirguna does not mean having no qualities at all but the absence of evil qualities. Ramanuja admits three *Pramana*s- perception, inference and verbal testimony. He rejects nirvikalpa stage of perception. Inference is treated in the same manner as in Nyaya. With respect to *sabda*, there are two points to be noted- (1) all sections of the Veda are equally

important. There is no need to distinguish between the ritual portion and the knowledge portion as is done by Sankara. (2) Ramanuja gives much importance to the Agamas as to the Veda and to the Upanishads.

In Dvaita epistemology the process of knowing is explained as a mode of the internal organ. Knowledge always points to a complex or qualified object. It does not recognise the division of three levels of reality as in advaita. Truth is defined as correspondence with outside reality.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. State the Nyaya View of Syllogism and compare it with the Western View.

…..
....
....
....
....

2. Give a brief account of the *pramanas* accepted by Purva Mimamsa.

…..
....
....
....
....

1.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have given a detailed study of the Logic and Epistemology in the different schools of Indian philosophy. Through this unit it will become evident that valid knowledge is prama and *Pramana* is the means to it. *Pramana* are mainly four including perception, inference, verbal testimony and comparison. Schools of Indian thought accept or reject these *Pramana*s and an elaborate picture of the same is given in this unit. As the general science of inference is logic, it is also given due importance while dealing with schools which accept inference. The unit makes it explicit that all schools of Indian thought accept perception as one of the chief instruments of knowledge. To the end of the unit, theories of error of different schools are also mentioned.

1.10 KEY WORDS

Pramana: Criterion of valid knowledge.

Syllogism: It is the inference of one proposition from two premises.

Fallacy: Any error of reasoning.

Antah karana: Internal organ constituted of mind, ego-sense and intellect.

Naiyayika: An adherent of the Nyaya school

1.11 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

Sharma, Chandradhar. *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1983.

Narayana Rao, P. *The Epistemology of Dvaita Vedanta.* Madras: The Adayar Library and Research Centre, 1976.

Puligandla, Ramakrishna. *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: D.K.Print world, 2008.

Raju, P.T. *Structural Depth of Indian Thought.* New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1985.

UNIT 2 INDIAN METAPHYSICS

Contents

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to provide a sketch of Indian Metaphysics. This unit looks into the fundamental questions raised and answered by Indian metaphysics and outlines its conceptual structure. It will provide a comprehensive account of Indian Materialism, Realism, Dualism, Pluralism, Idealism and Absolutism of different schools of Indian tradition.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Metaphysics is the theory of reality. It raises profound questions about the nature of matter, life, mind, God, space, time, numbers, of causation, freedom and fate, and of objects and events. What sets metaphysics apart from other enquiries is the distinctive method of approach where it seeks to answer the questions only through natural faculties of which reason is the chief. It is not possible to speak of Indian Metaphysics

in the singular. Each school of Indian Philosophy has developed a distinct metaphysical view that is consistent with its epistemology and ethics. The motive of metaphysical thinking in the Indian tradition has been practical and not merely theoretical. Questions related to the Universe and creation have been subordinated to the concern for the ultimate destiny of man and its fulfillment.

2.2 INDIAN MATERIALISM (CARVAKA)

The school of the Carvaka or Lokayata held a metaphysics of materialism. The Carvakas were materialists and Naturalists because they believed in the reality of physical Nature alone; every object being a form assumed by Natural elements. The process by which the elements assume the forms are also natural, not guided or controlled by any supernatural agency. Since *pratyaksa* is the only *pramana* accepted by Carvaka, the four elements – earth, water, fire and air – are the only categories accepted by it. The fifth element *akasa* is not accepted as it is not an object of perception. All objects in the world including human beings are made up of the four basic elements. The differences among the types of objects in the world are due to differences among the patterns in which the four elements combine with one another. The atman is nothing but the physical body of man. The living man is conscious, but consciousness emerges when the material particles of the body come together in a particular pattern and form a particular structure. When that pattern deteriorates and the body disintegrates and is destroyed, the constituents separate themselves and the emergent quality disappears. The Carvaka brings in the analogue of the instance when yeast is added to grape juice to make wine which acquires the quality of intoxicating power which is possessed neither by yeast nor grape juice. The Carvaka argues that God or an ethical potency need not be posited to create the world and its forms, because it believes that the elements come together naturally and produce the forms without any specific purpose. This mechanistic and naturalistic model of creation of the objects of the world is called *yadarcavada*.

2.3 REALISM OF NYAYA-VAISESIKA

The Nyaya-Vaisesika classifies reality under a few categories (*padarthas*) in order to facilitate a comprehensive treatment of reality. The Vaisesika recognizes seven such categories. One of them is *abhava* or non-being that stands for all kinds of non-existence, which is classified into four: *pragabhava* (prior non-existence), *pradhvamsabhava* (non-existence after destruction), *anyonyabhava* (mutual non-existence) and *athyanthabhava* (absolute non-existence). The remaining six categories represent various kinds of being (*bhava*) and include *dravya*, (substance), *guna* (quality), *karma* (action), *samanya* (universal), *visesa* (particular) and *samavaya* (inherence). Nyaya had admitted sixteen categories which are *pramana* (source of valid knowledge), *prameya* (objects of knowledge), *samsaya* (doubt), *prayojana* (end), *drstanta* (example), *siddhanta* (doctrine), *avayava* (members of syllogism), *tarka* (hypothetical argument), *nirnaya* (ascertainment), *vada* (discussion), *jalpa* (wrangling), *vitanda* (destructive dialectic), *hetvabhasa* (fallacies of inference), *chala* (quibbling), *jati* (futile objections), and *nigrahasthanas* (points of defeat in a debate). Except *prameya*, the categories of Nyaya are logical and epistemological while the seven categories of Vaisesika are exclusively metaphysical. The important knowables (*prameyas*) according to Nyaya are twelve in number – the atman, the physical body,

senses, objects of the world, cognition or consciousness, mind, activity, imperfection, life after death, result, pain and final liberation.

The Nyaya school regards the atman as essentially unconscious. Consciousness arises in the atman as an adventitious property when perception occurs. Nyaya maintains that the atman constitutes an infinite plurality and each atman is the knower, doer, enjoyer and sufferer. God is one of the atmans but the greatest of them. Unlike other atmans, God is by nature conscious and his consciousness is eternal and infinite. God is only the efficient cause of creation, the eternal atoms being the material cause. The atoms are brought together by God in accordance with the ethical merits and demerits of the atmans.

The Vaisesika school defines substance (*dravya*) as that in which qualities and actions inhere (*samaveta*). Qualities and actions cannot exist except in a substance. The relationship between substance and its qualities and action is the inseparable relation of inherence (*samavaya*). There are nine kinds of substances: earth, water, fire, air, ether, time, space, spirit and mind. Of the nine substances, the first four, that is, earth, water, fire and air are constituted by atoms. Mind is also atomic in size but the other four substances – ether, time, space and spirit – are infinite. Time and space are indivisible and divisions like the past, the present and future of time and directions like north and south of space, are conventional and artificial. Qualitatively, the atman, mind, and atoms of the elements are different from one another. This difference is made possible because each individual has its own particular (*visesa*) that distinguishes it from others.

Of the four kinds of atoms, each group differs from another qualitatively. They are imperceptible to human beings except yogis. For ordinary human beings, the existence of atoms is proved by inference. All perceptible objects are composed of parts and are therefore divisible. But the division into parts cannot be carried on ad infinitum. Therefore we have to stop at some point where further division is not possible. This fundamental unit is the atom (*anu*). The atoms (*anu*) are imperceptible and so are their qualities. Two atoms combine to form a dyad (*dvayanuka*). Three dyads combine together to form a triad (*trayanuka*). The triad is the least visible unit. It is said to possess the size of mote in the sunbeam.

Quality is defined as the being that is different from substance and activity and that is itself without qualities and activities. The list of twenty four qualities listed in the Vaisesika school are: colour, taste, smell, touch, number, magnitude, distinctness (*prthaktva*), conjunction (*samyoga*), disjunction (*vibhaga*), nearness (temporal and spatial), remoteness (temporal and spatial), cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, hate, effort, weight, fluidity, viscidity, tendency (*samskara*), unseen merit, unseen demerit (*adrsta*) and sound.

Action belongs to finite substances and is the cause of conjunction and disjunction. It can only be a formal (*asamavayi*) and an instrumental (*nimitta*) cause but not a material cause, since only a substance can be a material cause. Actions are of five kinds: throwing upward, throwing downward, contraction, expansion and locomotion.

The universal (*samanya*, *jati*) is defined as that which is eternal (*nitya*) and which inheres in many. It is dependent on our cognition (*buddhyapeksyam*). It exists in substances, qualities and activities. It is of two kinds, the higher and the lower, the highest (*para*) beyond which there is no higher is Being (*satta*).

The particular (*visesa*) is defined as that which is ultimate and exist in eternal substances. It exists only in substances and that too only in ultimate, eternal substances. The particular is the ultimate differentiator. To illustrate, all the earth atoms are alike, yet they are differentiated from one another by each one having a particular.

Inherence (*samavaya*) is defined as the relation of inseparability. Inherence is found between the whole and its parts, between substance and qualities, between substance and activities, and between the universals on the one hand and substances, qualities and activities on the other. The whole inheres in its parts, qualities and activities inhere in substances and universals inhere in substances, qualities and activities. However, no higher universal inheres in the lower universals. Non-being (*abhava*) is defined as what is not, or as different from the six positive categories. Nyaya-Vaisesika holds that reality is both positive and negative. Non-being is real only with reference to our thought and is not related to any form of being. Yet Nyaya-Vaisesika holds that non-being is perceived , but only when accompanied by the thought, "Had the object been there, it would have been perceived". Non-being is of two kinds: relational absence (*samsargabhava*) and mutual negation (*anyonyabhava*). Relational absence is the absence of something in something else like the absence of the pen on the table. Relational absence is of three kinds: prior negation (*pragabhava*), posterior negation (*pradhvansabhava*), and absolute or infinite negation (*athyanthabhava*).

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1. Define metaphysics. What are the unique features of Indian metaphysics?

2. What are the fundamental tenets of Carvaka metaphysics?

3. What are the categories of reality accepted by Nyaya and Vaisesika?

2.4 REALISM OF THE SAUTRANTIKA AND VAIBHASIKA

The Vaibhasika and Sautrantika schools of Buddhism are affiliated to the Theravada or Hinayana sects of Buddhism. Buddhist realism takes its origin from the Sarvastivadins who are the advocates of the doctrine which says that all things no matter whether they belong to the past, present or future exist (*Sarvastivada*). The Vaibhasikas hold the view that the universe is ultimately constituted by simple, unanalysable elements called *dharmas*. The *dharmas* are regarded as impermanent or momentary (*ksanika*). There is no whole as distinct from the parts; concrete objects are mere aggregates (*skandhas*) of a number of *dharmas*. The aggregation of the elements is effected by the principle of causality conveyed by the doctrine of *pratityasamutpada* (theory of dependant origination). Both matter and mind are considered to be real; they are real in virtue of their simplicity, indivisibility and unanalysability, though they are both impermanent. The Universe is ultimately constituted of 75 elements, 72 of which are conditioned (*samskrta*) and the remaining three are unconditioned (*asamskrta*). This distinction suggests that the universe is the field where human beings are thrown into a state of bondage and which provides them opportunities to win back their freedom or liberation. The elements (*dharmas*) conditioned by *avidya* and passions that accompany it co-operate with one another so as to present themselves as a stream (*sasrava*) of phenomenal life (*samsara*) marked by the presence of pain (*duhkha*) or else the cause of pain (*samudaya*) and are held in a state of bondage. The elements are open to subjection to the counteracting process of their separation from one another and their suppression through the means of spiritual discipline (*marga*), resulting in the emergence of *prajna*. They are reduced to a state of quiescence, free from the pain and cause of pain, which is the state of *Nirvana*.

The Vaibhasika school classifies dharmas into five: (1) *rupa* (matter) (2) *citta* (consciousness) (3) *cetasika* (states and characteristics of the mind) (4) *citta-viprayukta-samskara* (powers that are neither mental nor material but common to both mind and matter) and (5) *asamskrta dharmas* (the unconditioned dharmas). The realism of the Vaibhasikas is subject to the limitations imposed upon it by the core ideas of Buddhism, namely momentariness (*ksanikavada*), theory of no-self (*nairatmyavada*) and the theory of particularity (*sva-laksana*) as opposed to generality or universality (*samanya*).

The Sautrantikas opposed the Vaibhasika contention that the elements exist in the past, the present and the future. The admission of the continuous existence of things through the past, the present and the future amounts to the acceptance of a form of eternalism, which is unacceptable to Buddhist metaphysics as a whole. The Sautrantikas criticize the Vaibhasika contention that whatever is an object of thought, exists. Whatever exists admits of being thought of but the converse is not necessarily true. The Sautrantikas consider some of the elements admitted by Vaibhasika to be fictitious like *akasa* (space), *niravana*, *citta-viprayukta* (non-mental powers) and the past and future aspects of elements. The Sautrantikas list forty three elements classified under five heads: (1) *Rupa* (matter) comprising four primary forms (*upadana*) and four secondary or derivative forms (*upadaya-rupa*) (2) *Vedana* (feelings) including pleasure, pain and the neutral feeling (3) *Samjna* (signs or sense-organs) consisting of five external sense organs and one internal sense organ called *citta* or *manas* (4) *Vijnana* (consciousness) of six kinds corresponding to the six sense organs. (5) *Samskaras* (powers or forces) numbering twenty in all including ten good (*kusala*) and ten bad (*akusala*) ones. Like Vaibhasikas, Sautrantikas also admit the reality of the twofold world of matter and mind. The Vaibhasikas hold that our

knowledge of objective reality is direct and immediate and is yielded by perception while the Sautrantikas regard this knowledge as indirect and mediate, i.e, derivable from inference instead of from perception.

2.5 REALISM OF MIMAMSA

The Mimamsa propounds a metaphysics of ethical action. It advocates qualitative and quantitative pluralism. It substitutes ethical action for God himself. The efficacy of ethical action is a force that creates the forms of the world and is the controller of the world and its organizer. The world is meant for action and is created by action. Dharma is the central concern of the Mimamsa and it is that which supports the universe. Ethical action must be what answers to a Vedic injunction (vedapratipadya). Dharma brings forth the desired fruits of action; if ethically right, it brings forth enjoyment, if ethically wrong, it results in suffering (*adharma*). The Mimamsa does not regard dharma and *adharma* as qualities (*gunas*), but as constituting a potential force which is extraordinary (*apurva*) and the unseen (*adrsta*). This force or *sakti* resides in the atman of the agent and controls and determines the future life of the atman. Action performed at the present produces its fruit often after a lapse of time. But causation is a continuous process without any time intervening between the processes of the cause and the appearance of the effect. The Mimamsa therefore postulates that the action we perform does not end when our activity ends, but assumes the form of a potential force that remains as a potency until the circumstances become ripe for its fruition. This force called the *sakti* is unseen (*adrsta*) and since it is extraordinary it is called *apurva*. The Mimamsa accepts the reality of the atman as distinct from the mind (*manas*), senses and the physical body. It is identified with the I –consciousness (*ahamdhi*); plurality of the *atmans* is accepted, each atman is regarded as infinite. Consciousness is not regarded as the essential nature of the atman, but arises in it as an adventitious quality when *manas* comes into contact with it. The atman itself is the seer, doer and enjoyer. The problem of God is taken up by Mimamsa in the context of the interpretation of the meanings of the words of the Veda. Jaimini regarded the relationship between the word and meaning as innate and therefore did not feel the need to posit God to fix the meaning of words.

2.6 DUALISTIC METAPHYSICS OF SAMKHYA

Samkhya presents a qualitative dualism of spirit and matter, the material principle being Prakrti and the spiritual element, Purusa. The Purusa which is of the nature of pure consciousness, throws the reflection of its consciousness on Prakrti and this initiates a process of evolution. While Prakrti is one, Purusas are infinite in number. Prakrti evolves the universe through its three constituents (*gunas*): the *sattva* (pure), *rajas* (active) and *tamas* (inert). All the objects of the universe are composed of three *gunas*. The original nature of the *sattva* is pleasantness (*priti*), of the rajas, drive, and of *tamas*, dullness and inertia. None of the *gunas* are found alone without the other two. In the objects of the world, one or the other of the three gunas dominates over the other two. Prior to evolution, the *gunas* remain in equilibrium in *Prakrti*. Due to inexplicable association of the Purusa with Prakrti, the reflection of the Purusa is thrown on Prakrti that destroys the original equilibrium of the *gunas*. Evolution of the world out of *Prakrti* follows. Various theories have been offered in the Samkhya school to explain the nature of the contact between Prakrti and Purusa that vary from

each other, but according to all those theories, the contact has no beginning and therefore the universe is beginningless. The Samkhya in its aetheistic form gives twenty five categories (Prakrti and its evolutes + Purusa) that evolve from Prakrti during the course of evolution. They are not the meanings of words (*padarthas*) as in Nyaya-Vaisesika but as ontological entities. The theistic Samkhya adds God in addition to the twenty five.

The Purusa is a pure knower (*drasta*) but not a doer (*karta*). Action belongs to *manas*, *ahamkara* and its evolutes, all of which are evolutes of *prakrti*. The purusa exists by himself, separate and unrelated to everything else (*kaivalya*). The Samkhya accepts a plurality of *Purusas* because it maintains that birth, death and all other physical characteristics are separate for each individual. If Purusas are not many, when one man is born, all others must be born at the same time; if one man knows an object, all the others must know it; if one man acts all the others must act. Similarly enjoyment, suffering, good and evil, must be the same for all. Since Purusa is a pure witness and never the doer, the existence of different egos implies that they are the reflections of different Purusas. The essential nature of the Purusa is consciousness (*cit*). In the state of bondage after evolution, the Purusa may think that it is happy or miserable but this is due to the lack of discrimination between itself and the higher evolutes of *prakrti* to which the dualities of happiness and sorrow actually belong. It is like the coloring of a pure, colourless, transparent glass by the reflection of some colour. When the Purusa identifies itself as pure consciousness, distinct from all the evolutes of *prakrti*, then it is said to be liberated (*kaivalya*).

2.7 REALISTIC RELATIVISTIC PLURALISM OF JAINISM

The Jaina metaphysics is a realistic relativistic pluralism; it is realistic as it accepts the existence of an extramental reality; it is relativistic as it denies the validity of any absolute predication of reality; it is pluralistic as it accepts the plurality of substances. Jaina metaphysics is metaphysics of substance. Even motion, rest, space, and action are substances.

Jainism regards every object as multi-modal (*anekanta*) and as possessing many characteristics. Jainism distinguishes between the substances that possess the characteristics (*dharmi*) and the characteristics possessed by the substance (*dharmas*). Characteristics are further divided into essential characteristics (*gunas*) and changing modes (*paryayas*). Both change and permanence are real. Every object has both positive and negative characteristics, from one point of view, if an object has the characteristic ‘P’, from another point of view it has the characteristic ‘~P’. Every object has the characteristics of origin, duration and decay. Jainism does not accept the view that the reality of an object lies in performing the function for which it is meant (*arthakriyakaritva*). Substance is divided into the extended (*astikaya*) and the unextended (*anastikaya*). Extended substance is further divided into the animate and the inanimate. The animate substance called the *Jiva* is one that displays the characteristics of consciousness (*cetana laksano jivah*). The Jivas are of two kinds: the liberated and the bound. The bound is again of two types: the moving and the unmoving. The non-moving are the plants that have only the sense of touch. Moving *jivas* are of four kinds: those with five senses like human beings, those with four

senses like bees, those with three senses like ants and those with two senses like worms. The atman is identified with the Jiva and the relation between the atman and consciousness is both identity and difference. The atman is endowed with both doership and enjoyership. Atmans are infinite in number, yet they coexist. Jainism rejects the reality of God as the Universal spirit and creator of the world. They reject all the proofs for the existence of God. The atman although not a material substance is regarded as extended; it being coextensive with the body that it inhabits. By nature atman is infinite but it has the capacity to expand or contract depending upon the karma that is present in it.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1. Give an account of the classification of substance according to Jainism.

2. What are the constituents of Prakrti? What are their characteristics?

3. Explain the process of evolution of the world according to Samkhya metaphysics.

4. What is the Jaina conception of substance?

2.8 IDEALISM OF VIJNANAVADA SCHOOL OF BUDDHISM

Vijnanavada school of Buddhism maintained that *Vijnana* (idea) alone is real. To the Madhyamika claim that everything is illusory, Vijnanavadins reply that even illusion is a kind of cognition. *Vijnana* cannot be reflected in any kind of dialectical argument. Vijnanavadins argues that since cognition and its object are inseparable, and since we cannot conceive or even speak of an object which is unknown, the external objects

which are said to exist independent of cognition, are inadmissible. If the object is external, then there can be no relation of its identity (*sarupya*) with cognition which is demanded by the possibility of its being cognized. The Vijnanavadins argue that the phenomena of illusion, hallucination and dream which involve cognitions without there being any extramental objects corresponding to them, testify to the fact that cognition creates its own object, instead of being determined by objects existing independently of it. Thus the Vijnanavadin concludes that there are no extramental objects

Madhyamika showed that the ultimate reality cannot be described either in the positive or negative terms. Even the phenomenal world cannot be described because none of the categories we use in describing the world has its own nature. Nagarjuna held the theory of naturelessness (nihsvabhavata) and attacked the view that everything has its own nature or character (sarvam svalaksanam). If everything is devoid of its own characteristics and is void then the Absolute reality itself must be void. Whatever is experienced is only an appearance of the void; appearance is the empirical truth (*samvrtisatya*) and the void is the Absolute truth (*paramarthikasatya*). Then even the Buddha, his doctrine, the aggregates, the bases and the elements are not ultimately true. If the world is not real, it could not have been born and therefore was never born.

2.9 NON-DUALLISTIC ABSOLUTISM (*ADVAITAVADA*)

The metaphysics of Advaita Vedanta of Sankaracarya is centred on the establishment of the reality of only the Brahman, showing that the world cannot have an independent being of its own and demonstrating that the being of the world is rooted in the Brahman. Sankaracarya accepts the reality of Brahman on the basis of the Upanisads. The *svarupalaksana* (defining or constitutive characteristics) of Brahman is *Sat-Cit-Ananda* (infinite being, consciousness and bliss). Advaita introduces the concept of levels of reality which are not levels of truth, but levels of Being (*satta*). Advaita propounds four levels of Being, the lowest of which is the insignificant Being (*tuccha satta*). It includes the merely imaginary, fanciful and self-contradictory like the horns of hare, the lotuses of the heavenly river (sky lotuses), son of a barren woman etc. They belong merely to imagination and are acknowledged as having no place in reality. The next higher level is the illusory Being (*pratibhasika satta*) or apparent Being, the example of which is the perception of an illusory snake. Higher than the illusory Being is the pragmatic Being (*vyavaharika satta*) identified with the empirical reality. It is the product of our past ethical actions (*karmas*) and is meant for future actions. While the illusory being is contradicted by perceptual experience within the world itself and the experience of action, the pragmatic Being is not contradicted either by perception or action, but by dialectical reason and the intuition of Brahman. The innate self-contradictions of the pragmatic world are revealed to the light of reason by its own self reflection. Just as the illusory Being presupposes the pragmatic Being, the pragmatic Being due to its inherent self-contradictions presupposes the ultimate Being (*paramarthika satta*) that is above all contradictions. Uncontradicted and unchanged in the past, present and future, the ultimate Being marks the pinnacle of existence. Each of the lower levels of Being presupposes and is superimposed (*adhyasta*) upon the higher one.

The Advaitins use the word *Maya* to refer to the appearance of the objective world as an existent and its non-existence at a higher level. The world experience is a cosmic illusion whereas the appearance of the snake in the rope-snake illusion, is an individual illusion. The cosmic illusion is identified with *Maya* and the individual illusion is called *avidya*, although most Advaitins use the terms synonymously. *Maya* cannot be accepted as real since the illusion of Brahman sublates it, neither can it be called unreal as it is experienced by one and all until the Brahman is realized. Hence it is ontologically indescribable (*sadasadvilaksana*). Maya is treated as a positive entity (*bhavarupa*), its powers being concealment of the true nature of Brahman (*avaranasakti*) and the projection of the world of multiplicity (*viksepasakti*).

Advaita accepts only that cognition which is uncontradictable (*abhadya*) as absolutely true and only the Brahman stands this test of truth and this justifies the nomenclature of Advaita (non-dualism). The Brahman shines through the individual as the witness of Self, actions, cognitions and the states of the mind. This is called the witness consciousness (*saksi caitanya*). This witness consciousness delimited by the psycho-physical adjuncts is the Jiva. The witness consciousness is continuous with the Brahman and is non-different from it. The Jiva in its identification as a separate entity distinct from the Brahman is a mere appearance. It is essentially identical to the Brahman. Just as the ego (*ahamkara*) is continuous with the Brahman, so is the personal God Isvara. Sankaracarya uses the term Brahman for both, calling them the higher Brahman (*para Brahman*) and the lower Brahman (*apara Brahman*). The lower Brahman is the same as the higher Brahman, but as facing the world of objectivity, that is with reference to Maya. It is never overpowered by Maya like the Jiva. The Isvara is therefore never in bondage.

2.10 NON-DUALISM OF THE QUALIFIED WHOLE (*VISISTADVAITA)*

Visistadvaita holds the view that Brahman is non-dual but qualified or characterized by the world and the individual spirits, both of which form its body (*sarira*). Visistadvaita broadly divides the categories (*padarthas*) into the means of cognition (*pramanas*) and the objects of cognition (*prameyas*). The objects of knowledge are of two kinds, substance (*dravya*) and non-substance (*adravya*). Substances are of two kinds, the conscious and the unconscious. The unconscious are of two kinds, *prakrti* and *kala*. *Prakrti* is divided into twenty four categories as in the Samkhya. The conscious is of two kinds, the inward (*pratyak*) and the outer (*parak*). The inward is of two kinds, the atman and God. The atman is of three kinds – the bound, the liberated and the eternal. The outward consciousness is of two kinds – the eternal force (*nityavibhuti*) and the attribute consciousness (*dharmabhutajnana*).

Ramanujacarya maintains that the three attributes are not the constitutive qualities of Prakrti but merely their qualities. Ramanujacarya regards Prakrti as eternal and calls it by many names like the non-transient (*aksara*), *avidya*, *maya* etc. Ramanujacarya accepts the concept of eternal force or energy (*nityavibhuti*) from the Pancaratra. It is same as the pure transparent (*suddha-sattva*) and is also called the pure essence. It is never found mixed with other attributes of Prakrti. It is by nature unconscious (*acetana*), yet thoroughly self-relieving and blissful (*anandatmika*). It constitutes the bodies, the means of enjoyment, the objects of enjoyment and also the process of

enjoyment by God, the eternally liberated souls and the liberated souls. God's body has six attributes – knowledge (*jnana*), power (*sakti*), strength (*bala*), lordship (*aiswarya*), heroic quality (*virya*) and splendor (*tejas*). The Concept of attribute consciousness (dharma-*bhuta-jnana*) is an important contribution of Visistadvaita. The 'I' as the knower, reveals itself to itself, but not to the consciousness revealing the object. Thus we have two consciousness, one that reveals itself to another, and the other that reveals itself to itself only. The former belongs to the latter and is called its attribute (dharma). It is called attribute consciousness (*dharmabhutajnana*).

The atman according to Visistadvaita is by nature atomic (*anu*), but its attribute consciousness which is inseparable from it, is infinite. It is dependent on God and is subsidiary to (*sesa*) him, as the body is to the spirit. It is eternal, different for each individual and by nature blissful. It is the knower, doer and enjoyer (*jnata*, *karta* and *bhokta*). The nature of the atman is to be the 'I' consciousness (*ahamdhi*) and not mere consciousness (*jnana*) or mere witness consciousness (*saksi caitanya*). The atman is of three kinds – the bound, the liberated and the eternal. The bound souls are the ones living in the world of *prakrti*; the liberated are those souls that have freed themselves from *prakrti* and the eternal souls are the eternal servants of God, who live with him and have never done anything against his wishes. The liberated and the eternal souls live with God, enjoy like him and are similar to him. They are not identical to him and do not have the powers of creation and destruction.

2.11 DUALISTIC ABSOLUTISM OF MADHVACARYA

Madhvacarya proclaimed complete difference between the Brahman and the world and maintained that the non-duality referred to by the Upanisads had to be interpreted as that between a king and his subjects or one who is independent (*svatantra*) and one who is dependent on the former (*paratantra*). Since Madhvacarya rejects any relationship of being between God and the world, his philosophy is dualism (*dvaitavada*). It is primarily a dualism of God and the individual spirit and a dualism of God and the world. The world of matter (*prakrti*) is different from God and the individual spirits. Thus the philosophy of Madhvacarya is metaphysically qualitative dualism and quantitative pluralism. As a quantitative pluralist, he makes use of the Vaisesika doctrine of the particular (*visesa*).

Madhvacarya broadly divides the categories into the independent (*svatantra*) and the dependent (*paratantra*). The only independent reality is God. The dependent category falls into two kinds, the conscious and the unconscious. The individual atmans and supernal beings like the consort of Visnu, Lakshmi are conscious. The supernals are eternally liberated and perform certain cosmic and divine functions. Here Madhvacarya follows the line of traditional Vaisnavite mythology and the Pancaratra. He classifies the individual atmans into four kinds: those that are liberated like the *Hiranyagarba* (the Cosmic soul), who is called the highest soul (*jivottama*), those that are capable of obtaining salvation (*muktiyogyas*), those that are always transmigrating (*nityasamsaris*) and those that are eternally damned (*tamoyogya*), those that deserve only darkness). This classification involves the doctrine of predestination which is unacceptable to many Vedantins. The unconscious reality is of three kinds: *prakrti*,

space and time. Another classification enlists nine categories: substance (*dravya*), quality (*guna*), action (*karma*), universal (*samanya*), particular (*visesa*), the characterized (*visista*) or the whole (*amsi*), force (*sakti*), similarity (*sadrsya*) and negation (*abhava*). Substances are said to be nineteen in number: God, his consort (SriLakshmi), innate forces (*samskaras*, *vasanas*), the atman, space, prakrti, the three attributes (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*), mind (*manas*), the senses (*indriyas*), the elements (*pancabhutas*), the subtle elements (*tanmatras*), ignorance (*avidya*), word sounds (*varnas*), darkness (*andhakara*), time (*kala*), reflection (*pratibimba*), cosmic reason (*Mahat*), ego (*ahamkara*) and individual reason (*buddhi*). Madhvacarya's list of qualities include mental and ethical qualities such as self-control (*sama*), mercy (*krpa*), endurance (*titiksa*), gravity (*gambhirya*), beauty (*saundarya*), courage (*saurya*), fear (*bhaya*), liberality (*audarya*), strength (*bala*) and shame (*lajja*). The particular (*visesa*) plays an important role in the philosophy of Madhvacarya. The particulars are found everywhere and exist in all things, eternal and transient, conscious and unconscious, God and the world.

Madhavacarya identifies the atman with the witness consciousness (*saksi caitanya*). It is of the nature of 'I' consciousness (*ahamdhi*) which is different from the ego (*ahamkara*) which is an evolute of *prakrti*. It is the knower (*jnata*), doer (*karta*) and enjoyer (*bharta*) of the fruits of actions. The atmans are atomic and constitute a plurality, each having a particular (*visesa*). They are absolutely dependent (*paratantra*) on God, who alone is self-dependent (*svatantra*) or independent. By nature, every atman is existent, conscious and blissful (*sat-cit-ananda*). Through ignorance (*avidya*) of its original nature, it becomes entangled in *prakrti*. This entanglement is its bondage. Every atman is entirely different from God, *prakrti* and the other atmans. The Upanisadic statements that speak of the identity of the atman and Brahman, are to be interpreted as meaning that the atman is similar to the Brahman just as the reflection of a face in the mirror is similar to the face. The atman is self-conscious, self-revealing, and self-luminous, yet its consciousness is distinct from itself, just as the specific gravity of a substance is distinct from that substance.

Maya and *avidya* are treated as separate from prakrti in the philosophy of Madhavacarya. He regards Maya as the mysterious will of God (*Isvareccha*) and avidya as the ignorance of the atman. *Avidya* conceals the true nature of the atman and it conceals the Brahman from the atman. The latter results in the atman developing a false notion of independence from God. Like Ramanujacarya, Madhavacarya identifies the personal God with the Brahman. He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world and has infinite auspicious qualities. Madhavacarya insists upon five kinds of differences (*pancabheda*): (1) difference between the atman (*jiva*) and the Brahman (God); (2) difference between all that is unconscious (*prakrti*, time and space) and the Brahman; (3) difference of every atman from every other; (4) difference of every atman from all that is unconscious (*prakrti*, time and space); and (5) difference of every unconscious entity from every other unconscious entity. Madhavacarya accepts not only the difference of every member of a class from every other member of the same class (*sajatiyabheda*) but also every member of a class from every member of every other class (*vijayiyabheda*) but also the difference of every element of the content of a whole from every other element in that whole and

from that whole also. He says that every element is a particular (*visesa*) and is not merely distinguished but differentiated from the others.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1. State the arguments provided by Vijnanavada to conclude that there are no extramental objects.

2. Explain the Visistadvaita conception of *atman.*

3.Explain the Advaita conception of *maya.*

2.12 LET US SUM UP

Every school of Indian philosophy has developed a profound metaphysics of its own which is intertwined with the epistemology and ethics of that school. Indian metaphysics has evolved through a rich tradition of exegesis and dialectics. Ranging from materialism to spiritual absolutism, Indian metaphysics displays a wide range of standpoints.

2.13 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Banerjee, Nikunja Vihari. *The Spirit of Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann Publishers. 1974.

Dasgupta, S. N. *History of Indian Philosophy.* 5 Vols. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Hiriyanna, M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy.* Delhi: Motilal Banarssidas Publishers.

Max Muller, F. *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy.* New York: Longmans. 1928

Potter, Karl. *Presuppositions of Indian Philosophy.* Englewood Cliffs. Prentice Hall. 1963

Potter, Karl. *Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology.* Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1977.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy.* 2 Vols. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Raju, P. T. *The Philosophical Traditions of India.* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Raju, P. T. *The Structural Depths of Indian Thought.* New York: State University of New York Press.

Raju, P. T. *Introduction to Comparative Philosophy.* Carbondale: University of Southern Illinois Press. 1971.

Sarma, B. N. K. *The Philosophy of Sri Madhavacarya*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. 1962.

Sharma, Chandradhar. *Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy.* Delhi: Motilal Banarssidas Publishers.

Srinivasachari, P. N. *The Philosophy of Visistadvaita.* Madras: Adyar Library, 1950.

UNIT 3 INDIAN ETHICS

Contents

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study on Indian ethics is to give a short survey of the ethical foundation of Hindu religious philosophy and of other philosophical schools of India like Buddhism, Jainism and Carvaka. The primary purpose of this unit is to impart the religious and moral instruction to the students of philosophy and to make them aware of the principles of religions and finally to make them adopt certain good principles and avoid certain disturbing elements in order to create a healthy and a peaceful society.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Traditional Indian thinking is mainly spiritualistic with a firm belief that man has a soul within him as his real being. This 'soul' aspect of human person puts before him a goal higher than any other goal to which our natural physical inclinations lead. So man has to adopt a particular point of view which helps him go towards the higher, spiritual plane, the plane of his real, inner being (soul); so adopting the moral point of view is the apt human point of view to attain the goal of the inner being of man, namely, soul.

3.2 VEDIC AND VEDANTIC SCHOOLS OF ETHICS

Here we shall discuss an outline of the ethical vision and moral content of five representative Vedic and Vedantic texts, namely Vedas, the Upanishads, the laws of Manu, the Gita and the Ramayana. The beginnings of ethical vision is traced from the Vedas, particularly Rig Veda. Concept of *Rta,* the concept of Dharma and the concept of Karma become the central moral principles emerging from the Vedas. In the Upaniṣads the atman-centric understanding of morality takes precedence. The Self-realisation as *moksha* is the highest goal reached by good conduct and pursuit of knowledge. The *smrti* literatures like *sastras*, especially *dharmasastras* are moral codes and law books for the Vedic and Vedantic traditions. The practical guidelines and strict injunctions are found for human conduct with respective rights and duties in *Manusmriti,* although from the caste categories. The Dharmasastras, Epics and the Puranas have their own specific goal but they seem to share more or less a common 'ethos' from the point of ethics. The epics teach ethical ideals and thoughts of Hindu system. Much celebrated text of *Bhagavat Gita* focuses on moral actions coupled with attaining *Brahmajnana. Gita* emphasizes both *Karma Yoga* and *Gnana Yoga* for the attainment of the Supreme Bliss. Besides all the scriptural texts, the philosophical schools of Vedic and Vedantic traditions have focused well on the ethical concepts and conduct based on their metaphysical and epistemological positions. Putting them all in one category, despite the subtlety of differences, we have the following concepts.

3.3 DOCTRINE OF KARMA

Karma is of four categories: 1) *Sanchita Karma*, which means the accumulated past actions. 2) *Prarabdha Karma*, which means the part of *Sanchita Karma*, this results in the present birth itself. This is also called pre-destination. 3)*Kriyamana Karma*, which means present willful actions or free will. 4) *Agami Karma*, which means the immediate results caused by our present actions. There is another version of the meaning of *Karma*. This word *Karma* simply means action. And this *Karma* must remind us that what is called the consequence of an action is really not a separate thing but it is a part of the action and it cannot be divided from it. The consequence is the part of the action, which belongs to the future but yet the part is done in the present. For instance, when a person is wounded, at the time of accident he will not feel any pain but after sometime when he is quiet, he will feel the pain. Pain is the part of the action 'falling down' and 'wounding' but it is felt later though done in the present. When a man sins, he feels no suffering at the time of sinning, but later he feels the suffering. Thus we can conclude the theory of *Karma*, saying, whatever a man sows he shall reap.

3.4 TRANSMIGRATION OF SOUL

The doctrine of Karma and transmigration of soul are so closely bound up together. After the death of the body the life of the individual is continued in another body and so on in indefinite series. According to this theory, the soul though pure and blessed in itself, gets entangled in the *Samsara* (cycle of birth and rebirth). It is because of the karma it passes through innumerable births (transmigration) before it regains its original state. The purpose and mechanism of rebirth is elaborated in the Chandogya

Upanishad. According to Chandogya Upanishad a man after his death reaches the moon with the merit he has acquired during his life. He remains there as long as there is residue of his good works. And then he returns to space, from space he goes to mist and cloud etc. After having become cloud, he rains down. Then he is born as rice, trees, beans etc. If someone or the other eats him as food he develops further and finally those who are of pleasant conduct enter either the womb of a Brahmin or a Kshatriya, or a Vaisya and those who are of stinking conduct, enter either the womb of a dog or of a swine, or of an outcaste (*Chandala*).

3.5 SUPREME GOALS (*PURUSHARTHAS*)

The dominant interest of the Indian thought is in the highest value of human life. There are four values, which give meaning to human life. They are called Purusharthas: 1) *Dharma* 2) *Artha* 3) *Kama* 4)*Moksha*.

Dharma

The term '*dharma'* gathered more and more meaning down the ages and it became a term of complex and varied meanings. For dharma the dictionary suggests the terms like virtue, righteousness, duty, right, morality, justice, good, characteristics, tradition, ordinance and law etc. But dharma is essentially a human value operating in the universe of human ideals. The Brahadaranyaka Upanishad identifies 'dharma' with truth. That which is justice is truth. And justice and truth are the same (1.4.14). Sankara in his own way interrelates the three concepts *rta*, *satya*, and *dharma*. He says 'rta' is the mental perception of truth. Satya is the expression of truth in words as perceived by the mind. Dharma is the observance of truth in the conduct of life. And thus dharma is the way of life embodying the truth perceived. Dharma is usually distinguished into *sadharana dharma* and varnashrama dharma. *sadharana dharma* refers to the duties of the universal scope and validity. There are ten cardinal virtues known as sadharana dharma according to Manu; endurance, Patience, self-control, integrity, purity, restraint of senses, wisdom, learning, truth and absence of anger or non-violence. The varnasrama dharma refers to the duties of persons according to the castes and the stages of life. Thus 'dharma' is considered to be a means for attaining personal integration in the spiritual level or liberation.

Artha (Wealth)

The term 'artha' generally indicates the attainment of riches and worldly prosperity, advantage, profit and wealth. It means the whole range of tangible objects that can be possessed, enjoyed or lost and which we require in daily life for the upkeep of a household, raising of a family and discharge of religious duties. By the term 'artha', Kautilya in his book *Artha Sastras* IV 9 means both economic and the political aspects of man's life in the society. The materialistic aspects of life have great significance, because the absence of economic well-being of man is a great hindrance to the pursuit of personality integration and good life. Absence of economic well-being may also lead a man to adopt or to do immoral deeds to satisfy himself. The Mahabharata stresses the great importance of wealth saying that poverty is a state of sinfulness. All kinds of meritorious acts flow from the possession of great wealth. From wealth springs all religious acts, pleasures, and heaven itself. From wealth one's

merit increases but the man who has no wealth, has neither this world nor the next. The man who has no wealth succeeds not in performing religious acts. Kautilya in *Artha Sastra* recommends that the state should punish those who renounce the world without having first satisfied the claims of society and family. Kautilya would not even allow ascetics to enter into the villages of the kingdom for fear that they may cause disturbance in the economic activities of the villagers. Hindu philosophers are not uncritical about the admirers of wealth nor are they fanatical supporters of its abolition. They say virtues themselves are impractical without wealth. Without wealth neither virtue nor desire can be won.

Kama (Satisfaction of Desires)

Kama is a comprehensive term, which includes all desires: desires ranging from the cravings of the flesh and the yearnings of the spirit. The Hindu view is that man should only gradually overcome the insistent cravings of the flesh. The only human end is the attainment of pleasures and the Hindu view holds very strongly and it is an accepted principle that any spiritual aspirant should not try to achieve his realization by forcibly starving his normal biological desires, that is to say, he should not suppress the desires of the flesh very violently. In Hindu thought there is always a clear emphasis on the enjoyment of secular pleasures along with the emphasis on the realization of spiritual values. Vatsyayana in his book *Kama Sutra* gives a great treatise on erotic enjoyment. It deals with the various aspects of sex life and the natural strivings of human heart. However Vatsyayana suggests that the satisfactions of sexual desires are to be followed with moderation and caution. Hindu philosophers do not exclude anyone of the branches of human enjoyment, sex or arts, singing, playing on musical instruments, dancing, writing, drawing, tattooing, colouring the hair, nail, and so on. The uniqueness of the concept of *kama* and enjoyment in the Hindu ethics is that all of them are to be related to the spiritual goal of human existence and so the Indian ethics insisted on a regulated enjoyment.

Moksha (Liberation)

In every school of philosophy in India the first three *Purusharthas* are treated as the instrumental values, which directly or indirectly promote the *Parama Purusharthas*, the highest values of human life namely *Moksha*. *Moksha* is also known as by other names such as *mukti*, *apavarya*, *kaivalya* and *nirvana*. The concept Moksha has a negative as well as a positive side. In its negative aspect it signifies complete freedom from sorrow and in its positive aspect it stands for the plenary happiness or bliss. In the Vedic age the idea of Mukti was not in evidence. What the Vedic man sought was length of days on earth and life in heaven in company with gods. But it was in the Upanishads for the first time we find the full-fledged doctrine of Mukti or liberation. This liberation is intimately bound up with the karma samsara, the doctrine of transmigration. Almost all Indian schools of thought accepted the theory of karma and rebirth and the ideal of Moksha is conceived as liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.

As an ideal, moksha is pursued by an individual as a personal value. It is a spiritual perfection understood by the intellect, loved by the will and actualized in the daily life. It is understood as Jivanmukti in Advaita Vedanta. The man who has attained

liberation in this life is called Jivanmukta. Different schools propose different ways to attain Moksha. Advaita Vedanta of Sankara holds that knowledge or Jnana is the means of attaining Moksha. Here Moksha refers not to a new state to be attained but it is the realization of what has always been namely the realization of the Universal Self (*Brahman*), in one's own self (*Atman*). For this no morality is needed. The dualistic and pluralistic systems insist that the bondage of the individual can be removed by the Bhakthi Marga or path of devotion to God. There is another way promoted by the Gita to attain the ultimate realization in life and liberation from the cycle of births and deaths, which is known as Karma Yoga (Path of activity). The *Gita* has described this way as the method of disinterested action (*NishkamaKarma*). To attain *Moksha* one has to be freed from the bondage to one's own actions. Thus the *Gita* suggests the golden rule that actions should be done with the spirit of non-attachment to their fruits.

From all this understanding of Moksha one thing is clear that Moksha cannot be reached by bypassing morality or ignoring it, and a good life is indispensable and absolutely necessary for attaining spiritual perfection and Moksha.

3.6 SOCIAL STRATIFICATION (VARNASHRAMA DHARMA)

Varna-Dharma stands for social stratification or caste system. Before getting into discussion on the four-caste system we need to discuss the evolution of the Jivatma; Jivatma is the human person. The evolution of Jivatma is divided into four great stages. These four stages are universal and common to all human beings irrespective of caste, creed, colour.

The first stage is that which embraces the infancy, childhood, and the youth of the Jivatma. During this stage he is only fit for service and duty, and scarcely he has any responsibilities. The second stage is the first half of his manhood, during which he carries on the ordinary business of the world. He bears the burden of household responsibilities, such as accumulation, enjoyment, and proper disposal of wealth, together with the heavy duties of organizing, training and educating his younger ones in all the duties of life. The third stage occupies the second half of his manhood, during which he bears the burden of national responsibilities, the duty of protecting, guiding, ruling and subordinating his individual interests to the common good even to the willing sacrifice of his own life for the lives around him. The fourth stage is the old age of the Jivatma. In this stage, his accumulated experiences teach him to see clearly the valuelessness of all earth's treasures. And thus in this stage, he becomes rich in wisdom, compassion. He becomes the selfless friend of all, the teacher and counselor of all his younger ones. These four stages are universal and they are the foundation of a social polity; they have been represented by four external castes or classes.

The first stage is represented by Sudra caste, in which the rules are few and the responsibilities are light. The one great duty of Sudra caste is service and the virtues of the Sudra caste are obedience, fidelity, reverence, industry like that of a youth in his pupilage. The second stage is represented by the Vaisya, the typical householder,

on whom the social life of the nation depends. He comes under strict rules, designed to foster unselfishness and the sense of responsibility to nourish detachment in the midst of possession; he is made to feel the nation as his household. His virtues are diligence, caution, prudence, discretion and charity.

The third stage is represented by the Kshatriya, the ruler, warrior on whom depends the national order and safety. He also lives under strict rules, intended to draw out all the energy and strength of his character and to turn them to unselfish ends, and to make him feel that everything he possesses even life itself must be thrown away at the call of duty. His virtues are generosity, vigour, courage, strength, power to rule and self control.

The fourth stage is represented by the Brahmana, the teacher and the priest who lives under the strictest of all rules directed to make him a centre of purifying influence, physically, morally and spiritually. He must be devoted to study and he must be learned and wise. He is to be the refuge of all creatures, and their sure help in the time of need. His virtues are gentleness, *Pati*ence, purity, self-sacrifice. The Jivatma (human person) in any nation, at anytime who shows these types of virtues, belongs to the stage of which his type is characteristic. If he were to be born in India as a Hindu he should be born into the corresponding caste. Throughout the world, we can see that the broad dividing lines of classes follow these lines of caste system in India. The manual labour class (proletariat - Western term) should consist of Jivatmas in the Sudra stage. The organizers of industry, merchants, bankers, financiers, large agriculturist, traders, should be Jivatmas in the Vaisya stage. The legislators, warriors, the judicial and administrative services, the statesmen and rulers should be Jivatmas in the Kshatriya stage. And the teachers, clergy, the spiritual leaders, should be Jivatmas in the Brahmana stage.

There are three gunas (quality) of human mind. The human beings according to these innate qualities fall under one of the four castes. These three gunas are sattva, rajas, and tamas. Sattva (Real) is the noblest guna. The word ‘sattva’ means that which exists, that is real. It is the principle of goodness, happiness, bliss, luminosity and knowledge. Manifestation of consciousness is due to sattva guna. The Brahmins are those in whom the sattva or sattvika qualities are very much dominant. Rajas (Foulness) is the principle of activity, energy, motion. It leads to a life of feverish enjoyment and restless effort. Those people in whom sattva and rajas qualities are powerful are called Kshatriyas. Tamas (Darkness) is the principle of inertia, matter, resistance, passivity, negativity etc. It resists activity and produces the state of apathy or indifference. It leads to ignorance and sloth. Those people in whom rajas and tamas qualities are predominant, are called Vaisyas. And those people in whom tamas is very dominant are called Sudras. According to Manusmrti, this caste system functioned as the superstructure both in the legitimation and delineation of moral life. In order to protect the universe, the human beings are assigned separate duties and occupations according to their castes. Purusa Sukta speaks about the whole universe as the manifestation of the Universal Self called Purusa. The Brahmins sprang from the mouth of the Universal Self. The Kshatriyas sprang from his two arms. The Vaisyas sprang from his two thighs and finally the Sudras sprang from the feet of the

Universal Self Brahman. Since mouth is the seat of speech, it stands for learning, arms stand for strength, and thighs stand for productive works. Feet stand for other works of labour. Thus the duties and functions are assigned to the four castes by the very nature of their birth.

In *Bhagavad Gita* IV.13, we read that the four castes were emanated by me, by the different distribution of energies and actions; know me to be the author of them. Rig Veda X. XC. 12, we see, the Brahmana was his mouth, the Rajanaya was made of his two arms, and the Vaisya was made of his two thighs. The Sudra was born from his two feet. In Manusmrti we read I. 87-91 about the occu*Pati*on of each caste very clearly. Teaching and studying the Veda, sacrificing and guiding others in offering sacrifices, gifts and receiving of gifts are assigned to the Brahmanas. The protection of the people, bestowing of gifts, offering sacrifices, studying the Vedas (not teaching), practicing non-attachment amid the objects of the senses are assigned to Kshatriyas. The protection of cattle, bestowing gifts, sacrificing, studying the Vedas (not teaching), involving in commerce, banking and agriculture are assigned to the Vaisyas. And finally serving the three castes ungrudgingly is assigned to the Sudras.

Thus the teaching of Vedas is only assigned to the Brahmanas, but the duty of studying the Vedas is assigned to Brahmanas, Kshtriyas, and Vaisyas who are regarded as the twice-born because they have undergone the initiation ceremony (Upanayana), which is the rite to study the Vedas. Since the Sudras are not mentally equipped, they are denied of Upanayana. But yet a Sudra is eligible for receiving the knowledge about Vedas through secondary sources like Puranas and Itihasas. Manusmrti says, a man who does not show forth the dharma of his caste is not regarded as belonging to his caste, if they do not practice their own duties; they only bear the names alone as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas. And again Manu says, X.65 the Sudra becomes a Brahmana and a Brahmana becomes a Sudra by their very conduct. So too it applies to Kshatriya and Vaisyas. In Mahabharata, Vanaparva c1 xxx 21, 25, 26, we read, a man is called a Brahmana, when in him there are truthfulness, forgiveness, good conduct, gentleness, austerity and mercy. If they are not found in him, he is not a Brahmana, he is regarded as a Sudra, so also if these qualities are found in a Sudra, he is not a Sudra but a Brahmana. Shridhara Swami says, by birth everyone is Sudra but by Samskara he becomes a twice born and even then Brahmans and others are to be recognized by *Shama* and other qualities and not by their birth alone. The famous *Shloka* in Mahabharata, *Vanaparva*, ccc xiii 108 says, “not birth, nor Samskaras, nor study of Vedas, nor ancestry are the causes for Brahmanhood, conduct alone is verily the cause of Brahmanhood. So anyone can attain Brahmanhood by their conduct. For example, Valmiki Vyasa, Vasistha, and Narada who were all the children of Sudras.

Check your progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. Describe the theory of karma and its relation to the transmigration of soul.

2. The Supreme goals of human life in Vedic ethics - explain

3. Is the caste system a healthy system in Indian society – Comment?

3.7 ETHICS IN BUDDHISM

Buddhism brings about the four noble truths and eightfold path as the way of life intended for all people. This way of life is offered to all mankind without any distinction. This is the moral foundation of Buddhist ethics. The core of Buddhist belief is contained in the four - noble truths. The core is that there exists suffering and there is a way to escape suffering: a) Life is full of suffering; b) The cause of suffering is desire or craving; c) Eliminating suffering is liberation; and the final is the means for attaining *Nirvana* is eightfold path. The eightfold path as follows,

- Right Knowledge about four-noble truths
- Right Aim towards salvation
- Right Speech – right speech reflects our character. We need to avoid speaking false, slanderous, belittling words
- Right Conduct - no killing, stealing, lying, committing illicit sexual acts, consuming of alcohol
- Right Livelihood - having the profession of good nature, no butchering, slave dealer, prostitutes and trading of weapons
- Right Effort- one must have will-power to burn desires and develop virtues.
- Right Mindfulness- one must examine his behaviour and the thoughts from which it comes. By improving awareness one can become virtuous.
- Right Meditation - proper mental, physical preparation helps a person to attain nirvana. Salvation comes only from following four - noble truths and eightfold path. No god, no ritual and no type of outside power can save humanity.

Buddhist ethics are not arbitrary standards invented by man for his own utilitarian purpose nor are they arbitrarily imposed from without. Man-made laws and social customs do not form the basis of Buddhist ethics. Buddhist ethics finds its foundation not on the changing social customs but rather on the unchanging laws of nature. Buddhist ethical virtues are intrinsically a part of nature and the unchanging law of cause and effect. The Buddhist ethics are based on and rooted in natural law and so its principles become useful and acceptable to the modern world.

Morality in Buddhism is essentially practical and it is only a means leading to the final goal of ultimate happiness. Buddhist ethics are not founded on any commandments, which men are compelled to follow. The Buddha advised men on the conditions, which were most wholesome and conducive to long term benefit for self and others. The theory of Buddhist ethics finds its practical expression in the various precepts. These precepts or discipline are nothing but general guides to show the direction in which the Buddhist ought to turn to on his way to find salvation. The morality found in all the principles can be summarized in three principles: to avoid evils; to do good, to purify the mind. To make distinction between what is good and what is evil, Buddhism says, whatever actions that have their roots in greed, hatred and delusion and that spring from selfishness are called bad; they are called Akusala Kamma. And all those actions, which are rooted in the virtues of generosity, love and wisdom, are meritorious and good. They are called Kusala Kamma.

3.8 ETHICS IN JAINISM

In general Jaina morality consists in the essential observance of Pancamahavrtas (*panca-maha-vratas*) which are the ingredients of right conduct. For the attainment of Moksha, Jainism prescribes a threefold path known as Triratna (Three Jewels). They are right faith (*Samyag Darsana*), right knowledge (*Samyag Jnana*), and right conduct (*Samyag Caritra*). All these three are essential for the attainment of *Moksha* but Jainism gives primary importance to the third without which it is useless to observe the former two.

The Threefold path as Moral Values for Moksha

From the practical point of view Jainism necessarily invites us to have firm belief in the seven principles. Belief in the seven principles is known as right faith. The seven principles are: 1) Soul (*Jiva*) 2) Non- Soul (*Ajiva*) 3) Inflow (*Asrava*) 4) Bondage (*Bandha*) 5) Checking (*Samvara*) 6) Shedding (*Nirjara*) 7) Liberation (*Moksha*). All the objects and modifications of the universe come under the first two principles, soul and non-soul. Feeling, perception, consciousness are found in the impure soul. Body is included in the non-soul. Pain and its cause are described by the two principles inflow and bondage. Cessation of pain is liberation. The means of cessation is included in the other two principles checking and shedding.The good and bad activities of mind, body and speech are the causes for the inflow of karmic matter; these activities are the causes for bondage. Removing this bondage is liberation. The means to remove the bondage is checking and shedding the bad activities. This is the

way to attain Moksha. Now coming to the right knowledge, it is nothing but having right knowledge about the seven principles mentioned above.

Right conduct means giving up bad engagements and following good engagements. Five vows, five carefulness and three restraints have been said to be practical conduct by Jina. Five vows are called pancamahavrata: They are non-injury (*Ahimsa*), truth (*Satya*), non-stealing (*Asteya*), chastity (*Brahmacarya*) and non possession (*Aparigraha*). Five carefulness are called five *Samiti*: They are carefulness in walking, speaking, eating, handling and casting refuse. Three restraints are called three Gupti: they are control over mind, body, and speech. These thirteen kinds of conduct are for the monks from the practical point of view. But whether a householder or a monk, he has to follow *pancamahavratas* faithfully. Among these five vows, ahimsa is given a very wide connotation in Jainism. Ahimsa is to be practical not only in deed but also in thought and words. Keeping ill will against anyone in thought or speaking harsh words to anyone is also *himsa*. It is equal to inflicting any bodily injury to anybody. Even forcing someone to do something against his will is *himsa*. Similarly causing injury to someone due to negligence is also himsa. Practicing *ahimsa* in Jainism is not very easy; it is a kind of tapas. Sometimes the Jains go to the extreme of not burning light or cooking meal after sunset, so that no worms could be attracted towards light and thereby killed. Thus Jainism in line with Buddhism and Hinduism and in more stringent manner prescribes virtues meant for internal purity of the individual to lead him ultimately to *Moksha*. However social virtues like love, compassion etc are not neglected in Jainism. The three virtues of mahavratas, non-injury, truthfulness and non-stealing show the direct concern of the Jainas for social virtues.

3.9 HEDONISM IN ETHICS OF CARVAKA

In Tune with Buddhism and Jainism it criticizes the Vedic ritualism and ceremonialism. Carvaka school is the most ardent and ruthless critic of the Vedas. In its ethical teaching Carvaka is equated with Epicureanism and Hedonism. According to this school, attaining and enjoying maximum pleasure in this life is the only goal of man, because there is no other world or life beyond the present one. The Carvaka system says the Vedas have falsely and deceitfully shown the attraction of heaven for the attainment of which various kinds of rituals and sacrifices are prescribed. The Carvakas make a fun of and ridicule all Vedic prescriptions regarding rituals and sacrifices. According to them these are all innovations of the Brahmins to deceive people and to serve their own selfish ends. But the Carvaka system is purely materialistic, hedonistic and anti-Vedic doctrine and so it has very little impact on the general spiritualistic trend of the Hindu ethical ideas. It never had any recognizable effect on the moral thinking of the Indian people.

3.10 LET US SUM UP

To conclude the essential Buddhist virtues and Jaina virtues consist respectively in Pancasila and Pancamahavrata. Both Buddhism and Jainism give their virtues of individual purity. They give more emphasis on the individual morality. Buddhism and Jainism reject Vedic ceremonialism and ritualism and they do not speak of

Varnashrama Dharma of Hinduism. They both prescribe qualities of character and conduct which are equally applicable to all. They make distinction only between the duties of an ordinary man and those of a monk.

Check your progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1. Give your views on Buddhist teachings on ethical life.

2. Explain about three fold path of Jainism as foundation of Jaina ethics.

3. Carvaka: do you advocate any value in this system of Indian philosophy?

3.11 KEY WORDS

Artha: Wealth. As a goal of life, it is pursuit of goods

Dharma: Righteousness

Moksa: Liberation.

3.12 FURTHER REFERENCES AND READINGS

Chandravarkar, A. *Manual of Hindu Ethics*. Poona: The Oriental Book Agency, 1925.

Crawford, Cromwell. *The Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideals*. Hawaii: The University Press of Hawaii, 1982.

Kadankavil, Thomas. *Ethical World.* Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1995.

Mekenzie, John. *Hindu Ethics*. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1971.

Pushpendra, Kumar Sharma. Ed. *Hindu Religion and Ethics*. New Delhi: Asian Publication Service, 1979.

Prashad, Sital. *A Comparative Study of Jainism and Buddhism.* New Delhi: Sri Sat Guru Publications, 1982.

Sri Dhammananda. *What Buddhists Believe*. Taiwan: The Corporate Body of Buddha Educational Foundation, 1993.

Tiwari, Kedarnath. *Classical Indian Ethical Thought.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publishers, 1998.

UNIT 4 INDIAN AESTHETICS

Contents

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this Unit is to study the origin and development of art appreciation and experience, classified under the title 'Aesthetics' as a distinct branch of Philosophy. 'Aesthetics' a borrowed term from Greek, used in Germany for the first time to deal in the field of art experience is most often contrasted to the Indian Art-experience popularly known as '*Rasa*'. In this unit, we shall begin with an analysis of the word 'Aesthetics' and its employment in the field of Art. We shall then take a look at the literary development of Indian Aesthetics. In two sections, we shall briefly learn the theory of rasa followed by various other theories primarily dealing with the mechanism of art appreciation and experience. Finally, we shall see the role of Aesthetics in Philosophy and its distinct place as Aesthetico-Philosophy.

By the end of this Unit you should be able:

- to understand the role of Aesthetics
- to get a broad outline of the Aesthetic literature
- to appreciate the various theories of Aesthetics and
- to relate Aesthetics and its Philosophical implications

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO AESTHETICS

Let us begin with the analysis of the word 'Aesthetics'. Generally, it is associated in the field of Art. The art-appreciation is also known by the word 'Aesthetics' and also the art-experience. Though the words 'appreciation' and 'experience' are inter-related and overlapping, they are distinguished in the field of art. However, anything related to Art suggests the use of the word 'Aesthetics'. In this context, let us see what the word 'Aesthetics' means. It is a Greek word which means 'sense-perception'. Anything that is given to the senses is known as 'Aesthetics' and later it was used in the plural as 'Aesthetics'. In 1735, this word was for the first time formally used by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten in the sense of 'Science of Sensitive Cognition' in the field of Arts. Later, this Science of Art, namely, Aesthetics came to be recognized as a distinct branch of Philosophy under the head 'Philosophy of Art'. In the Indian context, we have simply borrowed the term 'Aesthetics' and broadly applied in the field of Indian Art and thus we say 'Indian Aesthetics' generally refers to the art-appreciation and art-experience of art forms. In order to understand the function of aesthetics in art, let us first survey the classification of art forms.

Art forms

In the Indian context, the art forms like music, dance, architecture, painting etc., are found mentioned in the earliest available works like the Vedas, Puranas, Itihasas etc. Thus, it is tedious to place historically the advent of art forms, but, we have in a span of 100 years, (18th-19th cent AD) located and arranged one of the earliest treatises dealing specifically with the art form and the mechanism of art-experience known as *Natya-Shastra* attributed to Sage Bharata. The period is roughly from 5th century BC to 3rd century AD. By this time, the art form is classified into three arts, namely, Poetry (*Kavya*), Drama (or Theatre) (*Natya*) and Music (*Gana*). We find classification of arts into 64 that includes stringing flowers, face-painting etc., but the identification of the three arts seems to enhance the study of art-experience elevating it from the physical plane to a spiritual plane. Even among these three, Bharata in the *Natya-Shastra* shows that the highest form of art-experience is Poetry and it can be well brought out by acting. The *Natya-Shastra*, deals with the three main arts and defines the art-experience as "*Rasa*" and provides the mechanism of what came to be known later as rasa-experience. This word '*Rasa*' though profound, reaching beyond the sensitive cognition, however over a period of time has come to be identified with the word 'Aesthetics' of Western origin. Now, in the light of the three main arts, we shall survey the literary development in these three art forms. We do have much literature in the other art forms, here; we restrict to these three arts basically to understand the evolution and development of Aesthetics in the Indian context.

4.2. A SURVEY OF AESTHETIC LITERATURE

We shall classify the Literature on Indian Aesthetics broadly into three based on the above classification of three art forms, viz., *Kavya*, *Natya* and *Gana*. Firstly, we present the earliest available treatise, that is, *Natya-Shastra* that commonly presents *Rasa,* the experience of any art form and specifically the three mentioned art forms.

Natya-Shastra and Its Commentaries

The treatise *Natya-Shastra* attributed to Sage Bharata, deals with the Science of Dramaturgy and we have at least three different editions with 36, 37 and 38 chapters. Considering the 36 chapters work as the earliest, we find the description of characteristics of poetical works (*Kavyalakshanam*) in the 17th chapter, different types of dramas (*Natakas*) also known as Rupakas, in the 20th chapter and music (*dhruvas*) in the 32nd chapter. The famous definition of *Rasa* in the aphoristic (*sutra*) form is given in the 6th chapter of *Natya-Shastra*. This is later referred to by the Aestheticians as '*Rasa-Sutra'*.

The available commentary to the *NatyaShastra* is that of Abhinavagupta (10th-11th cent. AD). The commentary is known as Natyaveda-vivritti and most popularly as Abhinavabharati. Abhinavagupta comments this treatise in the background of Pratyabhijna Shaiva system that is said to have prevailed widely in Kashmir. From this available commentary, we come to know that there had been several earlier commentators to *NatyaShastra*, like, Udbhata, Bhatta Lollata, Shri Shankuka, Bhattanayaka, Kirtidhara, Rahula, Shri Harsha and others. Basically the commentators differed in the interpretation of the *Rasa*-sutra and evolved their theories of *Rasa*. We shall deal with the theories of *Rasa* in 1.3 of this unit. The other features of the commentaries are the different viewpoints on the nature of drama

(*rupaka*), dramatic presentation (*vritti*), histrionics (*abhinaya*), and different aspects of music and poetical compositions. In the broad platform of *Rasa* theory developed various views on "aesthetically sound" poetic compositions. We shall now see some of the literary contributions in the field of poetry that took a prime place in the gamut of Aesthetic study.

Works on *Kavya* (Poetry)

Bharata describes alamkaaras literally known as embellishments that which gives rise to a beautiful poetry. Based on this later Aestheticians built up theories on producing a beautiful poetry by refining and re-defining the alamkaras. In that order, we enumerate here some of the important works in the Alamkara literature, that fall under the Aesthetic Theory of Poetry. The Bhamaha's Kavyaalankaara describes *Kavya* and divides it into three based on the language as Samskrita, Prakrita and Apabhramsha. Bhamaha is considered as the oldest extant exponent of the Alamkara School of Poetics. By this time, *alamkara* has evolved as a distinct school of Aesthetics in par with *Rasa*. Dandin, in his *Kavyadarsha* divides *Kavya* as *gadya* (prose), *padya* (poetry) and *mishra* (both prose and poetry). In the work *Alamkara-sara-sangraha*, the author Udbhata deals with 41 *alamkaras* with 90 illustrations. The author Vamana in his work *Kavya-alamkara-sutra*, declares *riti* or the special arrangement or combination of words, as the soul of poetry. The *Kavya-alamkara* is an extensive work of Rudrata. It consists of 16 chapters and reviews the whole field of poetics. He was the first to attempt a scientific classification of the figures as based on certain definite principles. In about, 9th-10th cent AD, the famous work *Dhvanyaloka* of Anandavardhana took a new form which settled the principles to be followed in poetics. It is considered as the epoch-making work in the history of poetic literature. He introduced the two senses in poetry, viz., expressed and implied. The term he uses is 'dhvani' that brings out the poetic beauty in a suggestive language. Rajashekhara's Kavya-meemaamsa serves more as a practical handbook for poets. Kuntaka in his *Vakroti-jivita*, is said to have elevated poetic expression with extra-ordinary charm known as vakroti. In the late 14th to 16th centuries we find standard works like Sahityadarpana of Vishvanatha and works of Jagannatha and others that seem to embellish further the theories of poetic compositions. We shall deal with the theories of Aesthetics in the light of poetry in 4.4 of this unit.

Works on *Natya* (Dramaturgy)

Some of the independent works on Dramaturgy is traced to the early 10th cent.CE, the famous work being *Dasharupaka* of Dhananjaya, commented by his brother Dhanika. It deals with the ten main types of rupaka as found in *NatyaShastra*. Another work is the *Nataka-lakshana-ratna-kosha* of Sagaranandin which also deals with dramatic elements. The *Natyadarpana* of Ramachandra and Gunachandra of early 12 cent AD also focuses on the elements of acting. We find a mention of *Natakamimamsa* by Ruyyaka, a Kashmiri Pandit but so far this work is not traced. The *Bhavaprakasha* of Sharadatanaya highlights the bhava or the emotion at the mental level. The *Rasarnava-sudhakara* of Simhabhupala treats dramatic elements in the closing section of the work. Vishvanatha in his *Sahityadarpana*, 6th chapter deals with acting and other dramatic elements.

Works on *Gana* (Music)

The work on music is traced to Pre-Bharata period. Dattila, a Pre-Bharata Aesthetician, seems to have recorded about 18 jatis (species of melodies) while dealing with music. Bharata, in the *NatyaShastra*, deals with 18 jatis in connection with rasa and bhava. The work '*Brihaddeshi'* of Matanga is considered as the forerunner of works on music. Matanga for the first time introduces the term "*raga*" from the root *ranj* to please. He defines *raga* technically and assigns the role of deshi music. Another important work on music is '*Sangeeta-Makaranda'* of Narada. Here, based on emotional feeling or rasa, the ragas are divided as masculine (*raga*) and feminine (*raginis*).

In this background, as theories of Aesthetics we shall deal with the following important Schools: *Rasa*, *Alamkara*, *Riti*, *Vakroti*, and *Dhvani*. Though mostly, they deal with the aesthetic sense in poetry, to some extent the mechanism of aesthetic pleasure can be extended to other art forms. A distinct Aesthetic theory representing every art form is yet to develop.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) Define Aesthetics. What are the three major art-forms?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

2) Survey the development of Literature of Indian Aesthetics.

………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………...

…………………………………………………………………………………………

4.3. AESTHETIC THEORIES - 1

Bharata's *Rasa*-Theory

Bharata defines '*Rasa*' in an aphorism in the sixth chapter of *Natya-Shastra*. It runs as follows: *Vibhava-anubhava-vyabhichari bhava-samyogaat-rasa nishpattihi.* 'The rasa is established by the combination of the determinants (vibhava), consequents (anubhava) and transitory emotions (vyabhichari bhava)'. Let us explain this further – In the definition we find terms like vibhava, anubhava and vyabhichari bhava that commonly have the word 'bhava' with different prefixes. So, let us try to understand the term 'bhava' first. Bhava, is generally translated as 'expression'; that is, bhava is

that which conveys a particular rasa through various techniques. The vi+bhava, is the determinant, that is, the rasa to be conveyed is expressed in the form of stage-settings, character's costumes etc. The anu+bhava, is the consequent, that is, the rasa to be conveyed is further expressed by gesticulation at the physical, verbal levels. The evoked *rasa* is further sustained by the *vyabhichari+bhava* or the transitory emotions. Bharata classifies about 33 *vyabhichari bhavas* also known as *sanchari bhavas*. The three combined, that is *vibhava+anubhava+vyabhichari bhava* constitutes in the establishment of *rasa*. Further, Bharata says that the unexpressed emotion at the mental level (known as *sthaayi-bhava*) alone when expressed results in rasa. Thus, there is a kind of cause-effect relation between the *sthayi bhava* and *rasa*. Bharata enumerates eight *sthayis* and its corresponding eight *rasas*.

STHAYI-BHAVA (unexpressed emotion at the mental level)	*RASA* (the experience of expressed emotion through gesticulations etc.)
RATI	*SHRINGAARA* (Sentiment of Love)
HASA	*HAASYA* (Sentiment of Laughter)
UTSAAHA	*VEERA* (Sentiment of Valour)
VISMAYA	*ADBHUTA* (Sentiment of Wonder)
KRODHA	*RAUDRA* (Sentiment of Anger)
SHOKA	*KARUNA* (Sentiment of Pity)
JUGUPSAA	*BEEBHATSA* (Sentiment of Disgust)
BHAYA	*BHAYAANAKA* (Sentiment of Fear)

The meaning of the words under the *Sthayi bhava* means the same as that of rasa, the difference is that the *sthayi* is unexpressed at the mental level and rasa is the experience of the expressed emotion. Further, *Natya-Shastra* conveys nine *rasa* (popularly known as "*navarasas*"), wherein '*Shaanta'* is the ninth *rasa* and its *sthayi* is identified as '*nirveda'*. Later, number of Aestheticians added to the number of *rasas*, '*bhakti'* (devotion), '*vaatsalya'* (motherly love) etc., that are more or less off-shoots of *Shringaara rasa* and we have schools that enumerate of more than 41 *rasas*. But, the two distinct schools of *rasa* are 1. eight *rasas* (excluding *Shaanta* as a *rasa*) and 2. nine *rasas* (inclusive of *shaanta* as a *rasa*).

Let us try to apply the definition in an art-form, say, visual gesticulation (acting). If the rasa proposed to be conveyed is, say, *Bhayanaka* (fear), then the stage-settings and light systems create a fearful condition – this is known as *vibhava*, which prepares the audience to the *rasa* that is going to be conveyed. Hence, *vibhava* is said as the determinant. The consequent or *anubhava* is carried by the actors; their physical movements expressed in the face, limbs etc., convey the fear. The *vyabhichari bhava* helps to sustain the *bhayanaka rasa* that is evoked. Now, the puzzling question for centuries and the continued debate is to the locus of rasa and *sthayi-bhava* and their relation. This continued debate gives rise to various theories of *rasa*.

Theories of *Rasa*

The Bharata's definition of *Rasa* is quite ambiguous, in the sense, it does not explicitly state the "*sthayi-bhava*" (unexpressed emotion in the mind) nor does it clarify the word "*nishpatti*" (establish) that occurs in the aphoristic rasa-definition. Thus, it gave rise to many theories of *rasa*, and we find four main theories recorded in the commentary of Abhinavagupta to *Natya-Shastra*. We shall examine briefly, each of these theories one by one. These theories mainly differ in identifying the locus of *sthayi-bhava* and the *rasa*.

Bhatta Lollata's *Rasa-utpatti-vada* (The Generation Theory of *Rasa*)

Lollata is said to have flourished between 5th – 6th cent. A.D. He is considered as a Mimamsa Philosopher and also as well-versed in Shaiva philosophy. His commentary seems to be the earliest on *Natya-Shastra*. He is believed to have commented on the entire treatise, but the work is lost and his theory of rasa is structured from the commentary of Abhinavagupta. According to Lollata, the sthayi-bhava is in the historical character who is portrayed on the stage. When the actor assumes the role of that character, then there is a rise of that sthayi-bhava secondarily in the actor. Then, through the vibhava, anubhava and vyabhichari bhavas this sthayi gets expressed that results in rasa. The word 'nishpatti' is understood by Lollata as 'utpatti' or produced. So, he states, the sthayi bhava is produced in the original character. Hence his theory of rasa is known as 'rasa-utpatti vada' or the theory of generation.

Shri Shankuka's *Rasa-anumiti-vada* (The Inferential Theory of *Rasa*)

The Logician, Shri Shankuka (6th-7th cent.AD), presented his theory of rasa opposing the view of Lollata. Shankuka tried to explain the rasa-theory on the inferential ground. So, he presents the paksha – the locus consisting of the reason; hetu – the reason that is directly perceived, sadhya – the result or the indirect perception of a thing is arrived at by a universal concomitance or vyaapti. Shankuka applies this inferential syllogism in the following manner;

Paksha – The actors are the locus

Hetu – the various gesticulations by the actors are directly perceived by the audience

Sadhya – the sthayi-bhava is inferred

Vyapti – gesticulations by the actors are possible only when there is *sthayi-bhava* in the mind of the actors

By the inferred *sthayi-bhava*, the audience relish the *rasa*. This is the *rasa-anumiti-vada* or the inferential theory of *rasa*.

Bhatta-Nayaka's *Rasa-bhukti-vada* (The Enjoyment Theory of *Rasa*)

Bhatta-Nayaka (9th-10th cent AD) is considered as a Samkhya philosopher who interprets the rasa-sutra by introducing for the first time the concept of 'generalization' or (*saadhaaranikarana*). He states, the *sthayi-bhava* in the whole enactment is general; it is identified by the spectators who then enjoy the rasa. He extends the concept of *saadharana* to the other elements too, like the *vibhava*, *anubhava* and *vyabhichari bhavas*. According to Nayaka, the art forms contain the

emotional fervour in general and that is communicated to the audience. Further, for Nayaka, the rasa is relished only when the mind of the audience is calm (*vishranti*) and detached (*samvit*).

Abhinavagupta's *Rasa-abhivyakti-vada* (The Revelation Theory of *Rasa*)

Abhinavagupta (10th-11th cent AD) is well-known Pratyabhijna Shaiva Philosopher (popularly known as Kashmir Shaivism). He opposed the above three views on *Rasa* and borrowing the concept of saadharana from Bhatta-Nayaka and the concept of dhvani from Anandavardhana, and in the background of Pratyabhijna Shaivism, developed his theory of *rasa*.

According to Abhinavagupta, the *vibhava* etc., portrayed to the spectator suggests the sthayi-bhava as belonging to someone (as in real life) and the by the imagination (pratibha) of the spectator, these accessories are reconstructed leading to the general or sadharana state. Here, Abhinava postulates the sthayi-bhava in the mind of the viewer too, which gets connected with that of the character portrayed through the actor. There is an emotional experience by the viewers through identification (tadatmya) with the character. There is revival of sthayi-bhava in the mind of the viewer; who is now not conscious of himself, in fact, he gets freed from the ego. Abhinava equates this ego-less state to chamatkara of Pratyabhijna system. Thus, for Abhinava, rasa is the manifestation of the intrinsic bliss of oneself aroused by the sthayibhava freed from obstacles. Thus, sthayi bhava is said to be transferred to rasa, there is the revelation of bliss or rasa. This is the Revelation Theory of *Rasa*.

4.4. AESTHETIC THEORIES - 2

Now, we shall briefly see the other theories of Aesthetics that developed into distinct schools primarily addressing the *Kavya* or poetry as the main art form.

Alamkara

The definition of a good poetic composition conditioned with 36 qualities included *alamkara* or embellishments in the form of figures of speech in Bharata's explanation of poetry. Later, Vamana (800 AD), identified the word '*alamkara'* as a 'thing of beauty'. Dandin and a host of other Aestheticians used '*alamkara'* in a wider sense. Dandin classified the various aspects connected to *alamkara*. Bhamaha divided *alamkara* as word (*shabda*) and meaning (*artha*). Thus, there emerged two kinds, *shabda-alamkaras* and *artha-alamkaras*. In course of time, from the four *alamkaras* mentioned by Bharata, as much as more than 100 kinds of *alamkaras* were introduced by the end of 17th cent AD. The school of *alamkara*, sub-ordinated the *rasa* and positioned *rasa* as one aspect of *alamkara*.

Riti

Vamana, the foremost Aesthetician, developed the concept of *riti* as the soul of poetry. *Riti* means diction, a particular arrangement of words. This special arrangement is again based on defined excellences (*guna*) of a composition. He gives

three kinds of *riti*: *Vaidarbhi*, *Gaudi* and *Panchali*. The *Riti* school suggests the enquiry as to what constitutes the essential beauty of poetry. It includes *rasa* among the necessary feature of poetic works. Thus, here too, *rasa* takes a sub-ordinate position.

Vakroti

The theory of poetical work further developed which gave rise to another distinct school spearheaded by Kuntaka in his theory of *Vakroti*. *Vakroti* means 'strikingness in expression different from the general mode of speech'. *Vakra* or turn/twist in the words of poetry was considered as the life of poems. The words in poetry which get a particular twist (*bhangi* or *vakrata*) in their use by a skilled poet are seen as poetic embellishment. This *vakroti*, for Kuntaka, demands greater skill and maturity of treatment.

Dhvani

Anandavardhana (who influenced Abhinavagupta and many others) propagated the theory of *dhvani*. *Dhvani* theory is seen as an extension of *Rasa* theory. It entrenched the theory of *rasa* in the field of poetry. Anandavardhana states in his famous work Dhvanyaloka that words can convey apart from its conventional meaning, a suggested meaning. In a composition, when the suggested sense prevails it is called *dhvani*. That is, a suggestive poetry is called *dhvani*. Anandavardhana tried to show that *rasa* can be best conveyed through *dhvani*.

4.5. AESTHETICO-PHILOSOPHY

In presenting various theories of Aesthetics, it is highly held that the theory of rasa as re-defined by Abhinvagupta is the best ever presented theory. His theory is inclusive of the ingredients contributed by his predecessors: there is focus on the character to be portrayed as given by Lollata, there is indirect conveyance method of Shankuka, and the sadharana of Bhatta-Nayaka. Abhinavagupta includes the theory of dhvani, as the method of communication as given by Anandavardhana. Thus, his theory is seen as a standard theory of *rasa*. In addition to all, it is Abhinavagupta who elevates the aesthetic to a philosophical plane in the background of Pratyabhijna Shaivism. Thus, here we shall see the application of philosophical thought that brings about the difference, from aesthetics to what is called "meta-aesthetics".

In the Pratyabhijna Shaiva system, the universal self is Maheshvara; considered in itself, it is Shiva, of the nature of luminosity (*prakasha*), consciousness (*cit*) and bliss (*ananda*). There is the universal energy (*shakti*) inseparable from Shiva. Shiva is bliss and also possesses bliss. An individual being is only a manifestation of Shiva. The bliss nature of self is forgotten because of concealment by impurities like ego (*ahamkara*) etc. Abhinava shows in his theory of rasa that the art form is instrumental in removing the obstacles and there is bliss (*ananda*) of the self that gets manifested which is termed as rasa. Following Abhinavagupta, there are other Aestheticians who give this philosophical bent to the aesthetic theories.

In this line, we find many philosophers present the aesthetic theory in the light of Vedanta. One such theory we find in the works of Shri Narayana Guru, identified as one of the contemporary Indian philosophers. In the background of Vedanta, Narayana Guru shows that the sense of beauty enjoyed (which we call *rasa*), is one Atma or self, that manifests as the object, instrument and the enjoyer. He terms the subjective enjoyer as '*ahanta'* and all the objective enjoyables as 'idanta'. In the moment of enjoyment, he says, there is forgetting of the subjective and the objective conditioning leading to oneness, that is *atma*. This he calls as the mysterious ways of the functioning of atma. He describes the creative process of God, in his *Darshana-mala*, as an art-work. He talks about the horizontal kind of beauty-experience, that is, the experience of beauty is an enjoyer – enjoying and enjoyable. He considers that in both the beautiful and the ugly, the enlightenment is nothing but the unfoldment of one ananda-atma. In this sense, he perceives the entire universe of enjoyment of Shiva as comparable to an epic conceived by a poetic genius. He speaks of both ecstasy and mystery in nature that reflects in art-works.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) Define Bharata's *Rasa* and examine the theories of *Rasa.*

…………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………….

2) How do you understand the development of "Meta-Aesthetics"?

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………...

………………………………………………………………………………………

4.6. LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to present the Indian Aesthetic growth beginning from the treatise of Bharata, that is, *Natya-Shastra*. This is the starting point of any Aesthetician in the Indian context. We have tried to re-define the perspective of Indian Aesthetics and its extension to the Meta-Aesthetics by the interpretation by Philosophers. In this unit, we have covered the literary development in Aesthetics. We have briefly seen the rasa-sutra of Bharata and the meaning of the various terms that occur in the rasa-sutra. We have covered the theories of rasa, mainly four as recorded in the commentary of Abhinavagupta. Then we saw the theories of Aesthetics in the light of poetry that took the prime place in history of Aesthetic development. The philosophical approach of an earlier philosopher, Abhinavagupta in the background of

Pratyabhijna system and the approach of a modern philosopher, Narayana Guru, in the background of Vedanta, gives an insight into the Aesthetico-Philosophical outlook. However, this field of knowledge is to be further explored. The position of Indian Aesthetics is yet to be proved as a distinct identified branch of a systematic philosophy in the Indian context.

4.7. KEY WORDS

Rasa – sentiment; feeling; emotional experience through art forms

Bhava – expression of sentiments

Alamkara – figure of speech

Riti – diction; a particular arrangement of words in poetry

Vakroti – striking turns in words that is used in poetry

Dhvani – suggestion; words conveying suggestive expression other than the conventional meaning.

4.8. FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Blackburn, Simon. *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Board of Scholars. *The Natya Sastra of Bharata Muni.* Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 2000.

Chari, V.K. *Sanskrit Criticism.* Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1993.

Culturual Leaders of Indian Aestheticians. Delhi: Publications Division, 1990.

Kane, P.V. *History of Sanskrit Poetics*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 2002.

Kivy, Peter. Ed. *The Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics.* USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Pandey, K.C. *Comparative Aesthetics: Indian Aesthetics*. Vol.I. Varanasi: Choukhambha Sanskrit Series Office, 1995.

Prasad, Muni Narayana. *The Philosophy of Narayana Guru*. New Delhi: D. K. Printworld (P) Ltd, 2003.

Ramachandran, T.P. *The Indian Philosophy of Beauty*. Part I and II. Madras: University of Madras, 1979.

Seturaman, V.S. Ed. *Indian Aesthetics: An Introduction*. Delhi: Macmillan Indian Ltd. 2005.

Sheikhar, Shiva. *Fine Arts and Technical Sciences in Ancient India.* Varanasi: Krishnadas Academy, 1982.

Indira Gandhi National Open University
School of Interdisciplinary and
Trans-disciplinary Studies

MPY – 001

Indian Philosophy

Block 6

ORTHODOX SYSTEMS -1

UNIT 1
Swami Vivekananda and Muhammad Iqbal

UNIT 2
Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore

UNIT 3
Aurobindo and S. Radhakrishnan

UNIT 4

B.R. Ambedkar and Raimundo Panikkar

Expert Committee

Dr. Keith D’Souza
St. Pius College
Mumbai

Block Preparation Team

Units 1 - 4 Shimmy Joseph V.
Pulikurumba P.O
Kannur, Kerala.

Content Editor
Dr. V. John Peter
IGNOU, New Delhi

Format Editor
Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

Programme Coordinator
Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Capturing the thoughts of the modern and contemporary Indian thinkers is quite interesting and enriching to construct the philosophical thought pattern of India in this period. Whether they rigorous philosophers is under scrutiny. Even to some extent some scholars raise doubt about calling something as contemporary Indian philosophy, for, we do not find in this period, the core philosophical issues like metaphysical and epistemological debates and arguments for and against as the classical Indian period witnessed. The so-called contemporary Indian philosophers are mostly concerned about reviving the old, making the ancient and classical thoughts relevant to modern Indian society and many of them are also focused their thought and action towards political and social field rather than abstract philosophizing. The reason might have been the concretizing the philosophical wisdom in times of encounter with the Western ideas and in struggle for political and social freedom.

In **unit 1,** the thoughts of Vivekananda and Muhammad Iqbal are arranged in an academic and systematic manner. The philosophy of Vivekananda is born out of his strong awareness of the social, religious and economic conditions of Indian masses. Humanism is the dominant aspect in Vivekananda's philosophy and religion. Iqbal is a mystic philosopher. Iqbal occupies a unique position in the contemporary Indian thought. The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam was one of the important aims of his philosophical thinking. Persian philosophy also made a great impact in shaping his philosophy. Apart from these, his contact with the western philosophical world also moulded his philosophy.

Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore lived in the stirring and crucial time of the history of India and contributed a lot to the philosophical, ethical, social, political, religious, and economic systems and theories. **Unit 2** captures the thought pattern of these two great personalities, though they are not systematic thinker in strict sense of the term. Yet we could follow certain philosophical stream of thoughts evident in the works and teaching of the both. Gandhi is an activist with certain convictions and thinking. Rabindranath Tagore is a religious poet, a seer, visionary or mystic. His philosophical thoughts are scattered in his literature.

Unit 3 introduces some of the prominent philosophical thoughts of two prominent Indian philosophers, namely, Aurobindo and S. Radhakrishnan. Aurobindo is considered as the greatest mystic of the modern age. The robust intellectualism, the powerful expression of philosophical thoughts, and the mystic vision are uniquely blended in his writings. Radhakrishnan's salient features comprise universal outlook, synthesis of the East and the West in religion and philosophy, the spiritualism and humanism, and openness to the influences of science, art and values. Radhakrishnan's philosophy aims at a creative assimilation of mystic perception and experience.

Unit 4 provides a bird's eye-view on the basic philosophical understanding of B.R Ambedkar & Raimundo Panikkar. Ambedkar, was one of the most learned among the political and social leaders of the 20^{th} century in India. In this unit, proper attention is given for his social thinking. Raimondo Panikkar, a reputed thinker, has been an inspiring presence in the field of

multi-faith and multi-cultural dialogue for over half a century. He occupies a unique place in the history of both Indian and world history of philosophy and theology by way of coupling Indian thoughts with the western.

UNIT I SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MUHAMMAD IQBAL

Contents

1.0. OBJECTIVES

One of the important aims of this unit is to give a gist of the philosophical thinking of both Vivekananda and Muhammad Iqbal. Swami Vivekananda, a great patriotic, dynamic philosopher and a vigorous religious preacher, finds his place in the history as the one who awakened the people of India from its age-old slumber and infused in it, a new life and spirit. He consecrated his life for the spiritual union and upliftment of the humanity with his deep insight. The thoughts of Vivekananda and Muhammad Iqbal are arranged in an academic and systematic manner. While writing this paper, only those subjects which appeared to be 'philosophical' were selected as their works cover a very large area. The unit provides the students a general idea regarding their stream of thoughts.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Swami Vivekananda was born in an educated and well-to-do family in Calcutta, on 12th January 1863. His father was a famous lawyer, educated and a well-versed person in modern liberal thought and scientific outlook. His mother was pious, wise and devoted to God. He studied the Western thought which ingrained in him the quality of critical enquiry and analysis. His inborn spiritual characteristics and his rational outlook were at tussle. He turned

towards the Brahmo Samaj which rejected idol worship and formulated the formless worship of God. His meeting with Swami Ramakrishna in the year 1881 was the turning point in his life. He accepted Swami Ramakrishna as his friend, philosopher and guide. An extensive travel that he made almost throughout India after the death of Ramakrishna in 1886 provided him the opportunity to get acquainted with the social and economical situation of the country. Meanwhile he participated in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. This particular meet witnessed the transformation of Vivekananda from an unknown sage to a spiritual and religious celebrity. He founded the Ramakrishna Ashram at Belur, near Calcutta. In 1899, he undertook a second journey to the West. He breathed his last on the 4th of July 1902.

Sir Muhammad Iqbal occupies a unique position in the contemporary Indian thought. He seems to be the only thinker of the contemporary times who tries to apply academic philosophical standards to Islamic thoughts. Mohammad Iqbal was born in 1876 at Sialkot. He received his early education at Sialkot and Lahore. In 1905, he went to Cambridge. For some time, he did research on Persian metaphysics at Munich in Germany. In 1908, he returned to Lahore and joined the bar as a barrister. He became very famous as a poet. Meanwhile he also showed a greater interest in his philosophical pursuits. He died in 1938 at Lahore. The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam was one of the important aims of his philosophical thinking. So, one can find a greater influence of Islam in the basic concepts and categories used by Mohammad Iqbal in his metaphysics. Persian philosophy also made a great impact in shaping his philosophy. He was also influenced by Islamic mysticism, especially, by Sufism. Apart from these, his contact with the western philosophical world also molded his philosophy.

1.2 THE PHILOSOPHY OF VIVEKANANDA

The philosophy of Vivekananda is born out of his strong awareness of the social, religious and economic conditions of Indian masses. He realized that the orthodoxy, superstitions, loss of faith in spiritual values etc., are the reasons for at least some of the social evils. The Hindu philosophy, especially, Vedanta which made him known as a Vedantist and the Buddhist philosophy made a great impact upon Vivekananda. Along with these Indian influences, he also carried, on his thought, the influence of Christianity. There were certain other influences too. For some time he was under the influence of Brahmo Samaj. It also seems that he was also influenced by the personality of Dayananda Saraswati. The Gita was also a source of constant inspiration to Vivekananda. But it must be admitted that the profoundest influence was that of his master Swami Ramakrisha Paramahamsa. It is right to say that swami Ramakrishna revealed him the spiritual path, unravelled and opened his soul, flooded the spiritual consciousness into his soul and removed the ignorance which obstructed and covered the wave and tide of the unbounded spirit within Vivekananda.

1.3 GOD, COSMOS AND HUMAN PERSON

The philosophy of Vivekananda is idealistic in the sense that he believes in the spiritual character of the ultimate reality. Vivekananda asserts that his idealism is not unrealistic but it is a living ideal capable of inspiring and attracting the human being towards itself. Vivekanada's idealism is monistic. He often describes reality in the fashion of the abstract monist. Basing himself on *Advaita* he says that reality is one absolute Brahman. According to him this Brahman is beyond space, time and causation, and as such it is changeless. But it

does not mean that it remains the same in all points of time. It rather means that the question of time is irrelevant to it. One cannot attribute qualities to the Absolute. It is indeterminate. But at the same time, an attempt can be made to give a working description of the Absolute. He tries to describe the Absolute as *Sat-Cit-Ananda*. Vivekananda believes that Absolute and God are not two. He likes to treat the Absolute and God under the same head. Metaphysically speaking, reality is absolute Brahman; the same reality viewed from the religious point of view is God. He feels that the *Vedantic* distinction between the Absolute and God is redundant. It is here that Vivekananda emphasises the all-pervasive nature of God. God is present everywhere and in everything. God is also presented as the one eternal principle. His assertion of God as a human god suggests that the human being bears the spark of Divinity within himself\herself. God is also conceived as the ultimate Ideal of life and existence. This Ideal can be reached through love. However, the question on the nature of God that Vivekananda speaks of (personal or impersonal God) is a subject of discussion. Many times he describes God as both impersonal and personal. But one who reads Vivekananda has more reasons to tell that he is inclined towards the personal God. But it does not negate his basic loyalty to the *Vedantic* understanding of God which speaks of an impersonal God. By way of presenting the personal nature of God, his main preoccupation was to bring religion closer to the common people.

The Cosmos: For Vivekananda, God is the only real principle and creation is God's creation. Therefore the creation is an aspect of God. Creation can be best understood as the expression of the creator in finite forms. But the problem remains unsolved; how has the Infinite become the finite? He explains that the Absolute has become the universe by passing through Time, Space and Causation. This description of creation implies that in the Absolute there was no Time, Space and Causation. Then, where do Time, Space and Causation come from? If we say that they are independent entities and they are outside of the Absolute, it will have a repercussion on the ultimate monistic conviction of Vivekananda. But he solves this problem showing that Time, Space and Causation are not metaphysical entities but they are mere forms as they are not independent entities. Time, Space and Causation are dependent on our mind and they change with every change of our mind. One cannot have any idea of abstract space or abstract time or abstract causation. So they have dependent existence. Vivekananda reconciles with the idea of *'jagat' 'mithya'* of Shankara telling that *Vedanta* does not assert the unreality of the world, but its *mityavada;* it merely emphasises that the world cannot have any fixed or absolute character of its own. It asserts the fact that world does not come out of God as a finished product and creation is not a completed process.

Maya: Vivekananda certainly borrowed the doctrine of Maya from *Advaita Vedanta*, but, at the same time, one can observe that his conception of Maya is not exactly similar to that of Sankara. Vivekananda shares his understanding of Maya with Sankara while telling that Maya is the principle of change, a power that makes creation possible. But Vivekananda disagrees with *Advaita Vedanta* where Sankara says that Maya is that power which creates illusion. Vivekananda believes that Maya does not necessarily mean being illusory or unreal. It is right to say that in his philosophy of Maya, Vivekananda seeks to express the essential characteristics of the world as it exists, where he says "......Maya is not theory for the explanation of the world: it is simply a statement of facts as they exist, that the very basis of our being is contradiction..." So Maya is a convenient name for the fact of contradiction that the universe demonstrates. Our whole life is a contradiction, a mixture of being and non-being. At places, in tune with the *Vedantic* thinking, Vivekananda also says that Maya can

neither be defined as existence or as non-existence. Vivekananda places Maya somewhere in between Absolute being and Non-being.

Human Person: According to Vivekananda, the real human being is a sort of a 'concentration of spiritual energy'. Man\Woman is a spirit. Man\Woman is not what he\she usually appears to be. He tells that human is spiritual because he\she represents some aspirations and urges which only he\she is capable of having. So it is right to say that the philosophy of Vivekananda presents the human being as an organized unity of the physical and the spiritual. And it is a fact that the importance of body was never undermined in his philosophy.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1.What is the teaching of Vivekananda on the Absolute and God?

....
....
....
....

2. How does Vivekananda explain the concepts of Cosmos and Man\woman?

....
....
....
....

3) What is the concept of Maya according to Vivekananda? ....
....
....
....
....

1.4. YOGA - THE WAYS OF REALISATION

According to Vivekananda the soul realises immortality through the process of yoga. It means union or it also stands for a kind of discipline.

The **way of knowledge** (*Jnana yoga*): The realisation that bondage is due to ignorance is the basis of the way of knowledge. According to Vivekananda, ignorance is the inability to distinguish between the real and the unreal. In other words, it is the ignorance of the real nature of the things.

Ways of devotion (*Bakthi Marga*): This is the way of knowing God through intensity of feeling. Vivekananda says that strong emotions have the capacity to awaken and activate the potential powers of human being. Ordinary emotions can be converted into powerful feelings; ordinary love can be converted into Divine Love or Supreme Devotion. This is the *Bhakti Marga*.

The **way of action (***Karma Marga*): According to Vivekananda, *Karma Marga* is a system of ethics and religion intended to attain freedom through unselfishness and by good works. Man\woman has to remain in the world and has to keep on working as well as he\she can. A continuous doing of selfless work enables a person to rise above his\her self, and to feel oneness with everything which is nothing but the realisation of immortality, the realisation of oneness of everything.

The **way of psychology** (*Raj Yoga*): It is the way of realisation of immortality by controlling the mind and the body. Here the mind and the body are controlled by way of subjecting them to certain physical and mental disciplines. Although Vivekananda speaks of these four ways differently, he says that they are different ways for the realisation of the same goal.

1.5. TOWARDS UNIVERSAL RELIGION

For Vivekananda all religions are attempts to get beyond nature. Seen under this angle, religion appears to be synonymous with spiritual realization. Religion is not in books and temples; it is an actual perception. Only the person who has actually perceived God and soul has religion. Seen empirically as a process it is man's\woman's struggle to go beyond nature and to live in the freedom of the spirit. "Religion is not in doctrines, in dogmas, nor in intellectual argumentation; it is being and becoming, it is realization.

Basic elements of religion: Vivekananda distinguishes three main aspects in religion: philosophy, mythology and rituals. First, there is the philosophy which presents the whole scope of the religion setting forth its basic principles, the goal and the means to reach it. The second part is mythology, through which the philosophy is made concrete. The rituals make the philosophy of religion more concrete through ceremonies and various physical attitudes and expressions. In rituals and workship he finds three elements that are found in almost all religions: symbols, name and god-man. Symbols are meant to represent the idea behind them. Holy names are the external expressions of the form; the god-man becomes the special instrument by which the divine becomes manifest to us.

Unity of religions: All the religions are good since their essentials are the same. Each man\woman should have the perfect exercise of this individuality but the individualities form a perfect whole. Each religion, as it were, takes up one part of the great universal truth, and spends its whole force in embodying and typifying that part of the great universal truth. It is therefore addition not exclusion. The ideal to be pursued is assimilation and not destruction, harmony and not dissension. If we want to reach a real harmony we cannot be satisfied with an attitude of tolerance; tolerance is a passive attitude; we tolerate error and sin but we do not have to tolerate religions. Out attitude should be of positive respect, sympathy and understanding.

The Nature of Universal Religion: A religion is said to be a universal religion only if it is able to fulfil at least two conditions. First, it must be open to all individuals. Secondly, it must provide satisfaction and comfort to every religious sect. Vivekananda is on that opinion that such religion is already there. One fails to recognize its presence as he\she is lost in the external conflicts of religions. First of all, religions are not contradictory to each other but

they are complementary to each other. Problem arises when each religion concentrates only on one aspect of religion. Secondly, Vivekananda makes it clear that there can be contradictory views of the same thing. We view, understand and grasp the truth in our peculiar way. But they are basically of the same reality and therefore complementary to each other. By universal religion, Vivekananda does not mean a religion that will have one universal philosophy, one universal mythology or one universal ritual. The spirit of universal religion demands that one should have the respect for the other ones. A kind of positive acceptance is another important requirement for universal religion. The believer in a universal religion must be broad-minded and open-hearted. At least one element which is common to all religions can be articulated as the element of 'God'. According to Vivekananda, though different religions talk of different aspects of the Truth, as aspects of the same Truth, they are all one. So, to Vivekananda, that Truth is God. Vivekananda believes that the ideal religion must harmoniously balance all the aspects of religion namely, philosophy, emotion, work and mysticism.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. How does Vivekananda explain the concept of yoga?

....
....
....
....
....

2. What is the nature of the universal religion that Vivekananda speaks of?

....
....
....
....
....

1.6. THE PHILOSOPHY OF MUHAMMAD IQBAL

Nature of Intuition: Mohammad Iqbal is on the assumption that the ultimate truths which religion and metaphysics seek to emphasize are not known by us in the ordinary way. The ordinary way is the way of experience. In this level whatever is known is known under space-time dimension and is useful from the empirical and pragmatic point of view. But the reality, in itself, cannot be directly known in this level of experience. Basing himself on the Quranic idea on 'heart', he says that the heart is a kind of inner intuition or insight which brings us into contact with aspects of Reality. So, thereby, he presents the heart as the faculty of intuition and intuition is the way through which Reality can be apprehended directly. He also speaks of the important characteristics of intuition. The important character of intuition is its **immediacy**. Intuition is the immediate knowledge of the Reality because it does not require any medium. Secondly, intuitive knowledge is always **a unity or wholeness** which is not analyzable. In intuition the knower becomes one with the known and the distinction between the subject and the object disappears altogether. Thirdly, intuition is a moment of **intimate relationship with the Supreme**. It is a feeling of the presence of the Divine. According to Iqbal, this intuitive experience has **an objectivity** about it. It is neither a subjective state nor merely a private and personal experience. The object of the intuition is not the mere creation

of the individual's intellect. But the object of the experience is really there. Iqbal asserts that intuition is not the property of the mind or intellect, but it is the **property of the heart**. He also says that the intuitive experience helps one **realize eternity** in a moment. He further explains that this experience gives the individual a sense of the unreality of serial time. Lastly, he speaks of the **incommunicable** nature of this intuitive experience. It is not communicable because of the simple reason that it is the function of the heart. He also says that though the content of this experience cannot be communicated, a mystic can interpret this experience in terms of verbal form and this interpreted truth can be easily communicated.

1.7. CONCEPT OF SELF

Traditionally, self is considered as that principle which organizes the activities and the experiences of an individual and gives them significance different from the bodily activities. In line with the traditional understanding, Iqbal also says that the self is the principle of unity in the individual, but he asserts that it not opposed to the bodily. He affirms that the self gives unity even to bodily activities. He develops his idea of self in tune with the Quranic conception of self and prefers to use the word 'ego' for the self. He asserts the necessity to accept the reality of the self. He explains that no mental state can exist in isolation, but there must be a unity organizing all the mental states. Parts of the material object can exist as isolated, but mental state cannot. This principle of unity of inner life or of the mental state is called as ego. It is the ego which keeps all experiences organized and united. It shows that it is the ego which organizes and gives a final shape and directions to our various affections and experiences.

Iqbal seems to be against the doctrine of parallelism of the body and the soul. According to him, both the body and the soul are systems of acts and as activities they are close to each other. The self is a series of activities and it needs an environment on which it will act or to which it will react. In other words ego cannot remain in complete isolation, it must have a world. The ego is confronted with the world of non-ego, and it is through his experience of the world of the non-ego that the life of the ego grows and develops. We have seen that all the experience is organized by ego. Such a conclusion leads to one of the important questions in philosophy; does the ego determine its own activities or is it casually determined by something else? This question is all about the question of freedom. Iqbal is of the opinion that the ego has the capacity to choose its course of action and thereby ego is free. Another important character of the self is its immortality. According to him the self is immortal in spite of its apparent fact of death. He believes that the self has the capacity to survive death and thereby, it is immortal.

1.8. HIS CONCEPT OF GOD

Basing himself strongly on the Islamic understanding of God, Iqbal declares his firm conviction on monotheism. For him, the question of God is more important because it satisfies not only the religious urge of man\woman, but also his\her metaphysical curiosity.

God as the Supreme Ego: Iqbal believes that the universe is of the nature of a free creative force. He is of the opinion that the world-process is purposive and is rationally directed. According to him rational egos are capable of regulating and directing their own creative life.

So it prompts us to think that there is a Being directing the creative life of the universe. So he comes to the conclusion that it is the Super Ego that guides the creative progress of the world. Here, he also explains the Quranic description of God as 'light'. Iqbal thinks that light is the nearest metaphor for understanding the nature of the Absolute Ego, which is the most perfect embodiment of dynamic and creative life.

Attributes of God: While talking about the attributes of God, he makes a distinction between the attributes apprehended by intuitive insight and those known through intellectual deliberations. Here, he mainly speaks of the intellectual attributes of God. According to him, creativeness, knowledge, omnipotence, eternity, immanence, transcendence etc. are some of the main attributes of God. **Creativeness:** the supreme Ego is creative in the way in which an ego is creative. He says that the Supreme Ego or God is creative in the inner way. It means that God creates completely from within himself. For Supreme Ego, creation means the unfolding of his own inner possibilities. His creativeness is infinite because these possibilities are infinite. **Knowledge:** for a finite ego or being, the knowledge is based on the distinction between the knower and the known. So the finite being knows 'the other' which is something different from the subject. But God is all comprehensive. So there is no 'other' for God. In other words, "in Him thought and deed, the act of knowing and the act of creating are identical". God himself is the object of His knowledge. God creates as He knows and knows as He creates. **Omnipotence:** Iqbal explains the Quoranic understanding of Divine omnipotence; the Divine omnipotence according to Quran, is intimately connected with the concept of Divine wisdom. One cannot neglect one of the important questions that the attribution of omnipotence to God raises. It raises the question of presence of evil in the world. He solves this problem by explaining the concept of freedom given to human by God for making it possible for him\her to bring out the potentialities latent in human beings. At the same time, human can use this freedom rightly or misuse this freedom for wrong choice. He considers that freedom is a basic requirement for goodness. So, he considers pain and suffering as the necessary aspects of the fact of freedom. He likes to treat both good and evil within the same whole.

Eternity: Iqbal does not treat eternity as a time concept. He does not speak of an idea of endlessness of time. God is considered eternal because He is the expression of the infinite possibilities latent in God. In this sense God is portrayed as eternal. **Immanence and transcendence:** According to Iqbal, God is both immanent and transcendent. But God is not immanent in the world as a pantheist understands. He is immanent in the world in the sense that the world is His creation. God is presented as transcendent in the sense that the God is beyond the grasp of the finite ego. So, by way of presenting God as a unity of infinite possibilities, the metaphysical demand of human being is satisfied. And by conceiving God as personal and Supreme Ego, the religious demand is also satisfied.

1.9. THE NATURE OF THE WORLD

Like many of the contemporary Indian thinkers who are aware of the present scientific exploration in determining the nature of the material world, Iqbal also asserts the reality of the world. He asserts that the external world exists and is real. Before we enter into the question of the nature of the material world, it is necessary to understand Iqbal's conception of space and time. According to Iqbal, space and time are relative. They are relative not only to the different grades of being but also to the different levels of experience of the same

being. The impression of space and time that we have will be different from the impression of space and time that other animals may have. He further explains that the physical world is understood in the analogy of the self. So the world is conceived as a continuous movement. He also finds that the universe also exhibits a tendency to egohood. The universe manifests a clear tendency to grow as an individual. And individual is a unity of its parts and the parts cannot exist apart from the whole. Iqbal applies the same principle to the universe where he says that even though one finds diverse and discrete aspects of the universe, there exists an inner unity among them all. He draws the conclusion by saying that the whole physical world can be viewed as an individual. This is the reason why Iqbal says that every detail of the world is an ego and the totality of the ego is the ego of the egos. So if the nature of the world is that of ego, it is nothing but growing. It has a reason, purpose and a plan and steadily progresses towards the realization of an end.

1.10. HUMAN DESTINY

In short, according to Iqbal the realization of immortality is considered as the ultimate human destiny. Immortality is presented both as soul's nature and as a person's destiny. Death is not the end of the soul. The soul survives the death and continues to exist even after death. But this is not all about immortality. One will be truly immortal only when these potentialities are fully and freely expressed. That is, one's real destiny, the realization and free expression of all the potentialities, is embedded in the self. Iqbal asserts that it is through persistent and continuous action one realizes it. It is in this sense that Iqbal presents immortality as ultimate human destiny. Iqbal tries to highlight three points in respect to immortality which The Quran speaks of. First of all he says that the finite ego has a beginning. It speaks of the finiteness and humanness of man\woman. The finite ego is a created being. So, immortality is that of the immortality of a created being and therefore, immortality does not mean attaining godhood. Secondly, he says that there is no possibility of its return to the earth. It implies that once the soul is free from the body, a person is free from the bondage of birth or re-birth and awaits the final judgment with regard to his\her destiny. So it does not involve a belief in rebirth. Thirdly, he states that finitude of the ego is not a misfortune. He criticizes those who are on the assumption that finitude is nothing but evil. He says that the dignity and uniqueness of the individual can be retained only when an individual is approached with his individuality.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1. How does Iqbal look at the concept of God and what are the characteristics of this God?

....
....
....
....

2. Explain his concept of the world with special reference to 'time and space'.

....
....
....
....
....

3. Explain his concept of human destiny and the three points he highlights on human destiny.

....
....
....
....
....

1.11. LET US SUM UP

Swami Vivekananda has revitalized the Indian thought. He identifies his thought with the philosophy of *Advaida* and gives the latter a new form. Brahman alone is real and the world is unreal. The body, life, mind, ego and the world are illusions. The Brahman is indeterminate, nameless,, formless, eternal, existence, truth-consciousness and bliss. Every religion worships the same Absolute in different ways. Humanism is the dominant aspect in Vivekananda's philosophy and religion. The religion is expressed in service to humanity, universal brotherhood and humanism.

Iqbal is a mystic philosopher. Intuition alone manifests the truth of God and nature. It gives an organic knowledge. It reveals the nature of ego and helps communion with God. God evolves with the cosmos. He is potentially Infinite and is the conscious force. God is duration and there is no limit for his creativity. The relation between the God and ego is that of a garland with its beads. For him the external world exists and it is real. The ultimate human destiny is the realization of immortality. Death is not the end and the soul survives death. But often Iqbal is criticized for conceiving God as pure becoming and reducing God's nature to mere fluxional phenomena. Such a criticism has its ground on the fact that if God is ever evolving, he is an imperfect reality and growing towards perfection.

1.12. KEY WORDS

Idealism: The theory that maintains the ultimate nature of reality as based on the mind or ideas.

Pantheism: It means that the god is found in everything. It has view that the universe is permeated with God.

Maya: The term maya has multiple meanings. It is mainly centered around the concept of world.

Intuition: It is *a priori* knowledge or experiential belief characterized by its immediacy.

Parallelism is a theory related to dualism which suggests that although there is a correlation between mental and physical events there is no causal connection. The body and mind do not interact with each other but simply run alongside one another, in *parallel*, and there happens to be a correspondence between the two but neither cause each other.

1.13 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Abhayananda, Swami. *Universal Religion and Vedanta.* Calcutta: Ramakrishna Vedanta Math Publications. 1968.

Bali, D.R. *Modern Indian Thought.* Bangalore: Sterling Publication Pvt. Ltd. 1980.

Dar, Bashir Ahamad. *A Study in Iqbal's Philosophy*. Lahore: Kashmiri Bazaar, 1948.

Fyzee, Asaf. *Modern Approach to Islam*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1968.

Iqbal, Mohammad. *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. London: Oxford University press, 1934.

Lal, Kumar Basant. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass

Manuel, Thomas. *The Advaita of Vivekananda.* Madras: T.R. Publications, 1991.

Mumukshananda, Swami. *The Complete Works of Swami Vvekananda*.Vol. I-VIII, Calcutta: Advaita Ashram, 1991.

---------*Teachings of Swami Vivekananda*. Calcutta: Advaita Ashram Publication, 1978.

Sinha, Sachidananda. *Iqbal, The Poet and his Message*. Allahabad: Ram Narain Lal Publishers, 1947.

Vahid, Syed Abdul. *Iqbal, His Art and Thought.* Lahor: Sheikh Mohammad Ashraf, Kashmiri bazaar, 1947.

Vishwanathan, S. Narvan. *Modern Indian Thought.* New Delhi:Oriental Longman Limited, 1978.

Vivekananda, Swami. *A Study of Religion*. Calcutta: Udbodhan Office, 1970.

UNIT 2 MAHATMA GANDHI AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Contents

2.0 OBJECTIVES

No philosophical consideration will be complete without any reference to Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore who lived in the stirring and crucial time of the history of India and contributed a lot to the philosophical, ethical, social, political, religious, and economic systems and theories. The most important objective of this unit is to help the students follow the philosophical stream of thoughts evident in the works and teaching of both Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore.

Rabindranath Tagore is a religious poet. It is right to call him a seer, visionary or mystic. It is from his poetry that we know of his philosophy. He does not present his philosophy in an academic manner. His philosophical thoughts are scattered in his literature. So, one has to systematically arrange his thoughts in a particular manner so as to make it fit into the mould of an academic philosophy.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi is a comprehensive system. His philosophy is not an abstract system of thought. Credit goes to him for blending philosophy with life, abstract principle with concrete reality of facts, religion with politics, and ethics with a programme for social evolution. His system is a synthetic unity of different sciences.

2.1 GANDHI: LIFE, INFLUENCE AND BASIC PHILOSOPHY

Gandhi was born in a Baniya family in Kathiavar, Porbanther, Gujarat in 1869. After his early childhood his family shifted to Rajkot. It is there he painfully and at times, tumultuously, spent the years of youth. After completing his high school studies, he left for England in 1887 where he qualified as a lawyer. Back in India he went to South Africa to deal with a legal matter. In South Africa, he became a leader of the Indian community. After several years at the service of the Indians of South Africa he left for India in 1914. At Ahemadabad, by the side of Sabarmati River, he built his *Satyagraha* ashram to prepare people for non-violent struggle. Soon he assumed an important role in India’s freedom struggle. After a few limited attempts at utilizing the method of *Satyagraha* to deal with various injustices, he launched a nationwide agitation in 1919. Then he saw that people were not ready for a non-violent fight and he decided to suspend that struggle. After spending a long time in educating the people, he launched a nationwide action in 1930 (Quit India movement). After his confrontation with Dr.Ambetkar, he turned his attention to social problems such as untouchability and social inequality. In 1934, he left congress and withdrew from active politics. Back to the political scene in 1939, he organized a movement of

individual *Satyagraha* as protest against the war politics of British government. After the war, when India's independence was drawing near, we find Gandhi deeply concerned with the Hindu-Muslim tensions. At the time of independence, he went to Calcutta to try to avoid bloodshed and violence. Back to Delhi, he was assassinated in 1948.

The main influences on him were from Hindu and Christian teaching. The Jain teaching with its radical demand of non-violence had also an early influence on him. However, in his mature years it is Gita that played the greatest role in his life. Gandhi understood Gita as the gospel of detachment and non-violence. Gita teaches that God is present in everything and that this divine presence leads us to see the basic spirituality of human life.

2.3 GOD AND TRUTH

We can find a basic consistency in his thought. The focal point of this consistency is the concept of truth. The quest to know 'truth' is an ever-unfinished quest and 'life is a continuous experiment with truth'. In this attempt of reaching truth, one relies on the two pillars of faith and reason. Gandhi seems to have two models to speak of God; a theistic model that is closely related to his old *Vaishnava* faith and an *Advaidic* type of absolutism. In the absolute model, God appears as an impersonal force or power or as divine law and as Truth. Gandhi agreed that we could say that God is love; but he felt that the word love is used in many ways and can be ambiguous. So he prefers to say God is truth. Later, Gandhi went further and said that truth is God. Wherever one finds truth, there one finds God also. Gandhi accepts the main features of Hindu tradition with regard to man\woman and the world. As a moral philosopher Gandhi's ethics is basically that of intuitionists. The still small voice within oneself must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty. This inner voice is the voice of God or the voice of truth. From the point of view of objective standard in ethics, Gandhi is an ethical naturalist. Man's\woman's nature is defined in terms of non-violence. When man\woman acts violently, he\she breaks the basic law of his\her own being.

Gandhi did not accept the principle that 'end justifies the means'. As the means so the end… there is no wall of separation between the means and the end…realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. While speaking about the fundamental moral virtues, he says: "Morality includes truth, ahimsa and continence. Every virtue that mankind has ever practiced is referable to and derived from these three fundamental virtues. Non-violence appears as the means and truth the goal. Continence appears to be necessary to reach the self-control which is necessary to dedicate oneself more and more fully to truth and non-violence."

2.4 NATURE OF THE WORLD

It is very difficult to outline precisely Gandhi's views on the nature of the world as his remarks on the nature of the world are both casual and scattered. But a close journey along with the works and words of Gandhi will tell us that he has a profound philosophy on the world. Gandhi believes that nature is the expression of God and it is the evidence of the all-pervasive reality. Gandhi says, "God manifests himself in innumerable forms in this universe

and every such manifestation commands my reverence." Gandhi also observes a force behind the laws of the universe which maintains the world in harmony, gives an order and saves the world from destruction. For him, this force is nothing but God and the laws are nothing but the ways of the working of that force.

2.5 CONCEPT OF HUMAN PERSON

Gandhi feels that man\woman is a complex being. The bodily man\woman is the apparent man\woman; his\her body is natural in so far as it is akin to the other objects of nature. The body grows and decays according to the laws of Nature. But, this aspect of a human represents merely the physical aspect. Man\woman is not merely a physical being. He\she has many other characteristics which are not just physical. He\she has consciousness, reason, conscience, will, emotion, and similar other qualities. He\she has an aesthetic sense, a feeling-sensibility, and an insight into the nature of good and bad. These are not physical activities, but rather these are all expressions of the real man-woman, of the spirit or soul present in him\her.

He believes that every individual is a mixture of the bodily and the spiritual. According to him, evolution is a change from the physical to the spiritual, aiming at the complete realization of Divinity. The elements of divinity, present in every human being, are expressed in different ways. They can be expressed by way of the presence of reason, conscience, free-will etc. He believes that man\woman can bring heaven on earth if he\she uses these Divine elements in the right manner. He also believes in the essential spirituality and goodness of every man\woman.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) Explain the Gandhian idea that 'God is truth'?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

2) How does Gandhi explain the concept of 'nature'?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

3) Explain the concept of man\woman according to Gandhi.

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

2.6 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Gandhi speaks of non-violent society, non-violent state and non-violent *Swaraj*. "All societies are held together by non-violence, even as the earth is held in position by gravitation." Gandhi did not give a blueprint of the non-violent society; from his writings we can see two main features of this society. First of all, decentralization of authority and village life: society based on non-violence can only consist of groups settled in villages in which voluntary cooperation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence. Centralization as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society. Here we shall have both economic and social equality. Economic equality is the master key to non-violent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour; it means leveling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and leveling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. This economic equality is to be achieved not by nationalization and compulsory acquisition of the wealth but by making the rich realized that they are not owners of the goods they have but they are only trustees of God.

For Gandhi social equality means a new approach to caste. Gandhi rejects the actual caste system because it contains the idea of inequality. The idea of inequality must go. However, Gandhi believed that we must keep the idea of hereditary transmissions of profession. Man\woman must remain faithful to his\her traditional family duties. But the idea of inferiority and superiority is totally repugnant to this. We must not however forget that the duty prescribed by one's caste does not limit one's action for society. Having performed one's hereditary duty one should free oneself to serve society in all possible ways.

Non-Violent State

Though he speaks of democracy, it is not a centralized democracy: 'In the true democracy of India the heart is the village. True democracy cannot be worked by twenty individuals sitting at the centre. It has to be worked out from below by the people of every village. The ultimate ideal of his political theory would rather be a state of enlightened anarchy; if national life becomes perfect and becomes self regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power, there is no state. But this ideal is never fully realized in life. Real *Swaraj* is reached when every man\woman has total political freedom. Concretely this is expressed in the following manner: "Real *Swaraj* will come not only by the acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words, *Swaraj* is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority."

Satyagraha

The non-violent ways or means to attain the goal of *Swaraj* is *satyagraha*. It is the non-resistance of the strong. He says: “Passive resistance has no power to change man’s heart…it is only what the weak offer because they are unable, not unwilling, to offer armed resistance.” *Satyagraha* is based on three basic moral principles: truth, non-violence, and the law of suffering. The reference to truth and non-violence is clear. The law of suffering is the acceptance to suffer rather than make the other suffer. Self-suffering is the test of love. To suffer without any violence outward or inward one needs strength, courage and fearlessness. *Satyagraha* implies a whole interior moral attitude of the *Satyagrahi*: “*Satyagraha* is gentle, it never wounds, it must never be the result of anger or malice. It is never fussy, never impatient, and never vociferous. It is breach of *Satyagraha* to wish ill to an opponent or to say a harsh word to him\her with the intention of harming him\her.”

***Sarvodaya* Society**

The term *Sarvodaya* literally means the rise of all, i.e., a society in which the good of all is achieved. Gandhi writes about the India of his dream where the goal of *Sarvodaya* is achieved: “An India in which there shall be no high class and low class people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony; there can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the use of intoxication, drinks and drugs. Women will enjoy the same rights as men.” From the writings of Gandhi five important aspects of *Sarvodaya* society can be identified. They are, *Rama Rajya* (Kingdom of God), *Sarva Dharma Samabava* (secularism), *Swaraj, Swedeshi* and *Panjayat raj.*

Poverty

The solution Gandhi proposed to the acute problem of poverty was ‘bread labour.’ “If every one of us bodily labours to earn his\her food, we would not see the poverty which we find today in the world.” He held the view that the poverty of the millions cannot be solved by big industries of the modern western type, which is based on industrial capitalism, rationalistic materialism and colonial imperialism. The introduction of machine into the production leads to the exploitation of masses by the small group of rich people through competition and marketing. Because of the demerits of heavy industries Gandhi encouraged small scale industries. About spinning wheel he wrote: “I would make spinning wheel the foundation on which to build a sound village life. I would make the wheel as the centre a round which all other activities will revolve.”

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) What is the Gandhian concept of non-violent state?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

2) What is the concept of *Satyagraha* according to Gandhi?

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

3) Explain the Gandhian vision of *Sarvodaya?*

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

2.7 TAGORE'S LIFE AND BASIC THOUGHT

Tagore was born on 7th August 1861, in Kolkata, Bengol. He belonged to an eminent and influential Bengali Brahmin family. He was born and brought up as an aristocrat and a lover of beauty. He became conscious of his higher mission of bringing human beings close to each other and to God. Tagore ranks with the greatest seers, sages and the devotees of India, who valued human being above everything else. Under the influence of the liberal tradition of his family and the philosophy of the Upanishads, he developed a positive view of life and love of humanity. He died on 7th August 1942.

Tagore had been deeply influenced by the thoughts of Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita. The medieval Indian religious and social philosophy also made an impact on his philosophical thinking. Though the metaphysics of Buddhism does not attract the poet much, the humanistic tradition of the Buddha and the Buddhist way of life appealed to him the most. In the spirit of the medieval saints and poets, he talked of the divinity of man\woman. Besides them, humanism of Vaisnavism, the mysticism of medieval saints, the philosophy of human being of the Baul sect of Bengal, humanism of Christianity and Buddhism helped him form his humanistic ideas and ideals. Apart from these, Brahmasamaj, the revival and reform of Bengali literature guided by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and the naturalistic and scientific movement also moulded his thinking.

2.8 SEARCH FOR THE ABSOLUTE AND NATURE OF THE WORLD

From his very early writings till his last poems Tagore's poems are marked by a quest for the Absolute. From the beginning itself he felt that there is a basic current of unity, a basic force of life and harmony behind the world. In the poems of *Gitanjali*, this basic force takes the form of a 'Thou.' This 'Thou' is presented as Supreme person who stands beside everyone, whose strength can transform his\her weakness into strength. Although this 'other' is the companion of one's life, he passes often unnoticed. Though man\woman fails to see him, yet he/she lives in a hope of a final encounter with this 'Other.' This final encounter will be a moment of ultimate bliss. One might look into the temples of organized religions to find this 'Thou'. But the God whom he/she longs for or seeks for is not there. It is in this sense Tagore says; "whom does thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thy eyes and see, thy God is not before thee. He is there where the tiller is tilling the

hard ground...” (*Gitanjali* XI). Already in *Gitanjali* Tagore suggests that the lord is to be discovered in man\woman rather than in the confines of the organized religions. The Absolute which was first discovered as the force present in nature, and then the force present in man\woman himself\herself is now declared as the “Supreme Man.” Tagore will now speak of the Humanity of our God or the divinity of man\woman.

Reality and God

Though in the metaphysical context the distinction between ‘God’ and ‘reality’ is still maintained, Tagore does not treat ‘reality’ and ‘God’ as two different entities. It is noticed that Tagore rarely uses the word ‘Absolute’ for the Absolute. The expressions that have been mostly used are: ‘The universal Man’, ‘The Supreme Person’, ‘The Supreme Spirit’, ‘The Infinite Personality’ etc. It can be said that his philosophy is peculiar and yet is a religious synthesis of Abstract Monism and a particular type of Theism. Reality, according to him is One. He identifies this reality with personal God. This identification of impersonal reality with personal God gives interesting results. And, therefore, Tagore can rightly be called ‘An Idealist’ or ‘A Spiritualist’; he can again be described both as a ‘Monist’ and a ‘Theist’. That is why many commentators on Tagore say so legitimately that Tagore’s philosophy oscillates between Sankara’s Vedanta and *Vaishnavism.*

Nature of the world

Tagore is of the opinion that the reality of creation has given a definite view on the nature of creation. Though his account of creation has a humanistic significance, it is, more or less, theistic. God, being the supreme reality, is the basis of the universe. Here, the creation is said to be the manifestation or the expression of the Absolute. According to Tagore, God finds Himself by creating. The reason for creation is joy. Using the Indian concept of *‘Lila’* Tagore says that creation is the *‘Lila’* of the creator. He creates in the fullness of joy- just to find Himself in the place of joy. Creation is separate from the Creator, and is yet united with Him.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) What are the influences that moulded the philosophy of Tagore?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

2) How does Tagore explain his concept of God?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………

3) What is the nature of the world that Tagore speaks about?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

2.9 PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN PERSON

The philosophy of Tagore itself suggests the ultimate aim of human person, that is, the final destiny. It is the realization of unity, the realization of Divinity; it is comprehension, in an act of supreme love, nature and everything else; it is the realization of the Universal within. Tagore says, "The ultimate destiny is the realization of immortality, of complete freedom. The spiritual progress of human being is from bondage to freedom. The embodied state is a state of bondage. As we go on unfolding the powers and the freedom of the soul by rising above the bodily bondage and by trying to realize our essential affinity with all, we are progressing towards immortality-towards the realization of complete freedom." While accepting human person as a material, psychological, social and moral being at a time, Tagore lays more stress on the moral and spiritual aspect of human person's nature.

Nature of Human Person

According to Tagore, human person's real nature is that which he/she has not yet realized. The real glory of persons is hidden in him/her; it is not extrinsic but intrinsic. All his/her outward activities and achievements do not reveal his/her nature. He/she is never satisfied with his/her present state, with what he/she is, but he/she craves for what he/she ought to be. Tagore does not think human person to be imperfect, but incomplete, which is due to the fact that the real meaning of himself/herself is not yet realized in his/her present state. According to him human nature invites selfishness now and then and commits errors and crimes. This selfishness is human nature, which hinders the real view of our true nature. Tagore says, "Every individual is to be helped, wisely, reverently, towards his/her own natural fulfilment. Every human person shall be himself/herself, shall have every opportunity to come to his/her own intrinsic fullness of being. The final aim is not 'to know' but 'to be'." Sin and evil are nature of person's superficial self. According to Tagore, though man/woman had not actually revealed the infinity in his/her nature yet, in him/ her infinite is present potentially and therefore, he/she, by nature is not sinful, but good. Like other Vedic and great thinkers, Tagore thinks that with the removal of ignorance or *avidya,* the human person's real nature will be revealed. His/her real nature is covered by the external covering of *'aham'*, which makes him/her limited to time and space.

The Self, Individuality and Universality of Human Person

Tagore emphasizes the reality and freedom of self. The self in us is divine. It is a part of God. The selves are the parts of the Divine, and they are, therefore, dependent on God. And therefore realize that 'self' which is divine in you. Human person is an individual, being and his/her individuality gives him\her unique identity among all creatures. Every individual is unique; in this plane he\ has no second to him\her. He strongly believed that no force can

destroy this individuality of a person and no other being except God can enter into this world of person which he/she calls ‘mine’. The field of the individuality is the field of his /her freedom.

Human person is not only individual, but also is universal. Human person has an idea of perfection. This idea of perfect being is present in every human being, and here he/she has universality within himself/herself. These ideas and values make human person one with all other persons. Thus this universality of human person raises him/her above other laws of nature. In this level, human being is universal; therefore there is no difference between one human person and other human persons. The differences of social, educational, economical and political conditions cannot differentiate the inherent unity of all human beings. Tagore says, “Human person’s individuality is not the highest truth, there is that in him/her which is universal. If he/she were made to live in a world where his/her own self was the only factor to consider then that would be the worst prison imaginable to them, for a person’s deepest joy is in growing greater and greater by more and more union with all.”

Human Being as a Creator

As human being is free, his/her freedom is expressed in his/her creative act where he/she becomes a partner of the Supreme soul. His/her true nature is not revealed in his/her acts of necessities, but in the acts, which he/she does joyfully. Human being is not contented with the world given to him/her. Therefore, he/she creates his own world of creation. But that is only a pure work of art, which is created from human being’s overflowing joy, and inner urges of creation.

Immortality of Human Being

Human being is great because he/she does not want to live in isolation, but wants to comprehend all. Again human being is great because God is expressed through his/her being. As a human being is God’s expression, he/she cannot be limited by the narrow boundaries of his/her lower self. For Tagore, a human person is made in the image of the Divine artist, God Himself, and the Divine Artist is incomplete and unfulfilled unless He finds expression in the finite and human person imitates the Divine Artist. This is his/her religious response which gives him/her immortality in Divine creator. He/she is immortal in that aspect where he/she is ‘true’ transcending her/his small partial ‘Ego.’ In his/her inner being he/she actualizes the desire of all, gives form to joy of all. But if he/she goes to the opposite direction, he/she falls from the truth of humanity. Therefore, Tagore wants to live in the plane where Human being is immortal, where he/she dwells in the universal. Tagore reminds human beings that they are ‘children of immortality’. Their immortality consists in their greatness. Tagore compares a person’s greatness with the morning sun whose horizon is far away from us. A person’s greatness consists in this that he/she knows that he/she is not yet born and he/she is yet to realize his/her true nature.

2.10 TAGORE’S RELIGIOUS THOUGHTS

The Religion of Rabindranath was the poet’s religion. It was neither an orthodox religion of piety nor a mystic religion of a theologian. The religious consciousness and the poetic talent

were so interrelated that he was unable to isolate the divine element from his poetic works. This is very well expressed in the insight meaning of his poetical work '*Gitanjali';* his religious life has followed the same mysterious line of growth as his poetical life. The spiritual freedom or the liberation of the soul or *'Mukti'* formed one of the cardinal truths of Religion. Each man\woman is conscious of the transcendental truth in him\her, which is made known to him\her through his\her inner fulfilment. The Religion of Tagore preaches fearlessness of the finite as it has implicit faith in the deathlessness of the real of 'Whole man'. The philosophy of self-surrender and the integration of the individual being with the cosmic being are as old as the *Upanishadic* teaching i.e., *'Tatvam-Asi'.* All these are possible when a human being learns the real significance of selfless life and detachment.

2.11 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Tagore's 'Social Philosophy' cannot be separated from his 'Humanism'. His social philosophy is an outcome of his humanism. In his social thinking humanistic viewpoint is expressed. His social thinking can be divided mainly into two broad divisions. One is the aspect of knowledge or analysis; another is the aspect of solving the problems or practical side. And he himself takes active part in removing and solving the problems of social injustice. Economic and political problems are also for him parts of our social life. Tagore never believes in the existence of any other world. When every individual of the earth unfolds all his/her potentialities and blooms in his/her fullest and complete form, and when all human beings co-exist in love and companionship with each other, heaven will come down to this earth. His social philosophy aims at progress of life in all its aspects. He was fully aware of all evils of India in those days – ignorance, poverty, social injustice, political subjection, slavery and bondage labour. Therefore in his philosophy, he wisely highlights the equality of human beings in full real freedom as individual human beings.

For Tagore, merely 'no- war' is not identical with peace, because according to him 'no-war' forms only negative aspect of peace. What matters to him is the positive aspect of peace, i.e. to realize spiritual harmony of human beings. Peace, according to him cannot be mere negative of war, but it should mean mutual understanding and sympathy among the people of the same nation, other nations and the universe at large. Therefore, real peace cannot be achieved by any instrument of policy but through the spirit of love. He has travelled all over the world preaching the ideal of universal peace. He believes that each race should be allowed to develop itself and at the same time a sense of unity should be developed in people, so that keeping their identities, the different races and nations can meet and unite with each other for the national and universal peace.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What is the nature of a human being according to Tagore?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
2) Explain Human being as 'Individual', 'Universal', 'Creator' and 'Immortal'?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
3) What does Tagore speak of religion?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
4) Explain the social philosophy of Tagore.
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
5) How does Tagore look at the concept of peace?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……

2.12 LET US SUM UP

Gandhi's system is a synthetic unity of different sciences. Humanism is the dominant principle in Gandhian philosophy. Gandhi speaks of two models to speak of God, namely, a theistic model and an *Advaidic* type of absolutism. He beautifully couples God with truth; he identifies God as truth and truth as God. The universe is considered as the expression of the absolute. Gandhi also finds the spiritual elements in the human being which acts as the basis of his\her dignity. Non-violent state characterized by economical equality can be considered as the essence of his political philosophy. In summary, his system is an exalted one in so far as he gives to mankind a complete set of social, economic, political, ethical and religious principles to govern the individual and humanity.

Tagore has an anthropomorphic conception of God. The infinite has been conceived as the supreme human personality. God is the creator of finite selves and nature. Though theism has the dominant theme in Tagore's philosophy, the impersonal and indeterminate nature of the absolute also finds place. The creation is considered as the '*Lila*' of the creator God. In other words God finds himself in creation. While speaking about human person, he places more emphasis on the spiritual and moral aspect of human being. One of the notable factors of Tagore's philosophy is that he sometimes makes his position confusing. The inconsistency in his thinking is justified by the fact that he is, basically, a mystic and poet.

2.13 KEY WORDS

Ethical naturalism, which identifies the rightness or goodness of actions with their tendency to promote happiness, thereby reduces moral facts to natural ones.

Lila: A concept in Indian philosophy that explains the universe as a cosmic puppet theatre or playground for the gods. *"Lila"* literally means "play," but in religious texts it refers to "divine play" - life as a spontaneous game played by light hearted forces beyond our understanding.

2.14 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Bose, Nirmal Kumar. *Studies in Gandhism.* Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publication House, 1972.

Chakrabarti, M. *Gandhian Mysticism.* New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 1989.

Datye, S.N. "Relevance of Gandhi's Leadership," *Gandhi on Social & Racial Equality*, ed. L.M. Bhole. New Delhi: Kalinga Publications, 2002.

Datye, S.N. "Relevance of Gandhi's Leadership," *Rethinking Mahatma Gandhi*, ed. by S.R. Kakade. New Delhi: Kalinga Publications, 2002.

Fischer, Louis. *Gandhi His Life and Message for the World.* New York: New American Library Publication, 1954.

Gandhi, M.K. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth.* Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publication, 2005.

Kytle, Calvin. *Gandhi Soldier of Non–Violence.* New York: Grosset & Dunlap Publication, 1969.

Lal, Kumar Basant. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publications, 1973.

Ramachandran, G. "Relevance of *Satyagraha* as a Weapon in Modern Times," *The relevance of Gandhi to our Times*, ed. by Bhabesh Chandra Barua. New Delhi: Rouse Avenue Publications, 1983.

Mani, P. Mahajan & K.S Bharathi. *Foundation of Gandhi and Thought.* Nagpur: Dattsons Publication, 1987.

Vatsyayan. *Social Philosophy.* New Delhi: Kedar Nath Ram Nath Publication, 1986.

"*Satyagraha*," July 16, 2006 [online]; available at http://www.gandhism.com

Basak, Kokali. *Rabindranath Tagore: A Humanist.* New Delhi: Classical Publishing Company, 1992.

Bharathi, K. S. *The Political Thought of Rabindranath Tagore.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1956.

Chakrabarti, Mohit. *Rabindranath Tagore Diverse Dimensions.* New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributions, 1990.

Cenkner, William. *International Philosophical Quarterly: Tagore and Aesthetic Man.* Ky. Shepherdsville: Publishers Printing Co., 1973.

Kumar Lal, Basant. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Indological Publishers, 1978.

O' cornel, Kathleen, *Rabindranath Tagore; the Poet as Educator,* Culcutta, Viswabharati, 2002.

Srivastava, Rama Shanker. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1965.

Srivastava, A. K. *God and its Relation with the Finite Self in Tagore's Philosophy*. New Delhi: Oriental Publishers, 1976.

Sharma,Chandradhar. *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976.

Srivastava, Rama Shanker. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*. Ranchi: Sharda Publishers, 1984.

Tagore, Rabindranath. *Towards Universal Man.* New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1962.

Tagore, Rabindranath. *Lipika: Prose Poems.* New Delhi: Clarion Books Publishers, 1978.

Tagore, Rabindranath. *Geetanjali.* New Delhi: Hind Pocket Books Pvt. Ltd., 1984.

UNIT 3 AUROBINDO AND S. RADHAKRISHNAN

Contents

3.0 OBJECTIVES

One of the important aims of this unit is to introduce some of the prominent philosophical thoughts of two prominent Indian philosophers, namely, Aurobindo and S. Radhakrishnan to the students. It will provide a general picture of their understanding on the Absolute or God, nature, human being etc. It also helps students have a glance at certain concepts which are peculiar and unique to each philosopher.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Aurobindo is considered as the greatest mystic of the modern age. The robust intellectualism, the powerful expression of philosophical thoughts, and the mystic vision are uniquely blended in his writings. Radhakrishnan's salient features comprise universal outlook, synthesis of the East and the West in religion and philosophy, the spiritualism and humanism, and openness to the influences of science, art and values. The values, culture, tradition, religions and philosophies of different countries are in synthesis in Radhakrishnan's philosophy. His philosophy does not aim at merely a constructive synthesis, but at a creative assimilation of mystic perception and experience.

3.2 LIFE AND THE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO

Aurobindo (ArvindGhose) (1872-1950), yogi, nationalist, poet, critic, thinker, spiritual leader of India, was born at Konanagar, West Bengal on the fifteenth of August 1872 as the third son of Krishna Dhan Ghose and Swaranalata Devi. Aurobindo Ghose was educated in England from the age of seven to the age of twenty-one. In 1906 Aurobindo joined the political movement of Indian resistance to British colonial rule and became a prominent voice of the nationalist party. In 1908 he was arrested. In 1910, Aurobindo shifted to French India (Pondicherry) where he developed his great religious and philosophical vision of reality. He spent the next forty years of his life in Pondicherry formulating his vision of spiritual evolution and integral yoga, and refusing to pursue direct involvement in political events. He died in Pondicherry in 1950. Some of his main works include; *The Future Evolution of Man, The Hour of God, The Life Divine, The Lights on Yoga, Savitri, a Legend and a Symbol, Foundation of Indian Culture, More Lights on Yoga, The Riddle of the World. The ideal of Human Unity, Bases of yoga, The Supernatural Manifestation on Earth etc.*

At an early age of his life itself he was exposed to the world of western philosophy. He was also well-acquainted with great philosophers like Plato and Aristotle. His study of ancient Indian philosophy, especially, the Advaita Vedanta and yoga, made a great impact on him. However, it is right to say that he relied mainly upon his own vision, contemplation and reason. He believed that religion is a *Sanatana Dharma*, eternal and universal. It cannot be confined to one religious tradition or one set of texts. Its only infallible scripture is to be found in the heart of man\woman. However, this eternal religion is remarkably well expressed in the spiritual tradition of India and so India has a God-given mission to be the guardian, exemplar and missionary of this religion. Aurobindo goes back to early Vedas and

discovers there, expressed in symbolic ways, the basic spiritual teachings of *Sanatana dharma.* While surface level meaning speaks of myths and rituals, the symbolical way of understanding the spiritual experience reaches the deeper secret meaning. The purpose of Aurobindo's philosophy was to bring out this meaning.

3.3 THE TRANSCENDENT REALITY IN AUROBINDO'S THOUGHT

Aurobindo conceives reality as supremely spiritual. The ultimate reality for Sri Aurobindo is the triune principle of *Sacidananda*. The ultimate Reality is Transcendent. This Transcendent Reality expresses itself in the cosmos. The ultimate Reality is linked up with the cosmos by the triple formula of Supermind that "Brahman is in all things; all things are in Brahman; and all things are Brahman".

In the thoughts of Sri Aurobindo, the supreme reality is eternal, absolute and infinite. Since it is absolute and infinite, it is in its essence indeterminable. The pure Absolute is indefinable, infinite, timeless, and spaceless. It cannot be summed up in any quantity or quantities; it cannot be composed of any quality or combination of qualities. The Absolute is beyond stability and movement as it is beyond unity and multiplicity. The Absolute is independent of all relatives, but it is also the basis of all relatives. It governs, pervades, and constitutes all relatives. Though it is indescribable and unknowable, it is self evident to itself.

Sacidananda

The highest positive expression of the Reality to our consciousness is *Sacidananda*. *Sacidananda* is the one with a triple aspect. For us, the highest positive expression of Brahman is the *Sacidananda* or Existence - consciousness - bliss, all in all. In other words, in the Supreme the three are not three but one; existence is consciousness, consciousness is bliss and they are not distinct at all. It manifests itself as indeterminate as well as determinate, as *nirguna* as well as *saguna*, as one as well as many, as being as well as becoming and yet it transcends them all. The existence *(sat)* of Brahman is that which appears to us as *Atman, Ishwara* and *Purusha.* The consciousness (*chit*) of Brahman which is always a force (*shakti*) manifests itself as *maya, shakti* and *prakriti*. The Bliss (*anand* of Brahman underlies all these manifestations and it is out of sheer bliss that Divine manifests himself as this world. These three aspects and these powers embrace all reality and when taken as a whole, reconcile all apparent contradictions.

Supermind Principle

In the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, the ultimate Reality becomes the world by the principle of Supermind. It is present there in everything of the world as consciousness and controller. Supermind is creative principal. It has been variously described by him. It is Real idea, it is truth consciousness, the seer will, the Creative Idea, the Creator, the God and so on. The mind is divided into three parts – Thinking mind, dynamic mind, externalizing mind, - the former is concerned with ideas and knowledge in their own ways, the second with putting out of mental forces for realization of the idea, and the third with the expression of there. For Aurobindo, the overmind is a link between the higher and lower Hemispheres. The overmind is a sort of delegation from the Supermind, which supports the present evolutionary universe in which we live here in matter.

By the Supermind what we mean is the full Truth - consciousness of the Divine Nature in which there can be no place for the principle of division and ignorance; it is always a full light and knowledge superior to all mental substance or mental movements. We call it the Supermind or the truth – consciousness, because it is a principle superior to mentality and exists, acts and proceeds in the fundamental truth and unity of things and not like the mind in their appearances and phenomenal divisions.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Aurobindo explain the Absolute reality as *Sachidananda?*

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

2) Explain the Supermind Principle of Aurobindo?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

3.4 NATURE OF CREATION: THE WORLD-PROCESS

Sri Aurobindo conceives creation as a double-process. It is a process of descent and ascent or involution and evolution. First of all, it is a descent of the spirit into the worldly forms and then it also implies an ascent of the worldly forms to its original higher status. Aurobindo describes creation as the plunge of the spirit into ignorance. Ignorance, according to Aurobindo, is not a separate power, but it is a part and parcel of Divine consciousness itself. In involution the spirit is descended into the matter.

The movement of ascent, that is evolution, follows the same pattern as the process of descent but in a reversed order, starting from matter and reaching the Supermind and thereby sharing in the life of the absolute. Evolution presupposes involution. In other words, evolution is possible only because involution has already taken place. Matter can evolve into life only because life itself has involved into it. The lower cannot evolve into the higher unless the higher is already in it. So therefore, he conceives evolution as a reverse process of involution. This process of ascent has a triple character: (Widening: simple forms of matter take an increasingly complex character so as to admit the concentration of a complex and subtle form of consciousness. (b) Ascent: from lower to higher grade of being. (c) Integration: as soon as the evolution reaches a higher grade, it takes up all the lower grades and transforms them according to its own principles and laws. It can be expressed in the following manner.

Absolute being *Sat-Cit-Anand*: to Supermind

INVOLUTION: Overmind ...Intuition...Illumined mind... Higher mind...mind... Life... Matter.

EVOLUTION: Matter...Life...Mind...Higher mind...Illumined mind...Intuition... Overmind.

3.5 MAN IN TERMS OF EVOLUTION

According to Aurobindo, so far evolution has passed from the state of complete inconscience to the grade of mental which is well represented in man\woman. So in man\woman lies the possibility of the next step of evaluation- the transition to the supra-mental level. Aurobindo believes that the man\woman who is evident to our senses is not the real man\woman- at least he\she is not the complete man\woman. In the process of evolution the appearances of man\woman does not correspond with the appearance of mind. With the animals the mind has already appeared. But with the coming of human intellect we have new dimension of the mind. Now, apart from the knowledge of appearance we have self-consciousness too. Following the general principle of evolution man\woman takes with him\her the inferior levels of matter and life to a higher level. There is no opposition between matter, life and mind but an integration of the three in a higher synthesis. Man\woman and all the lower levels of reality reach the divine manhood or 'super manhood.' This can be realized only through a long process of evolution. This process cannot be limited to one life span. This evolution is fully possible only if we accept the general principle of rebirth.

3.6 REALITY AND ITS ASPECTS

The soul is a spark of the Divine. It is the representative of the central being. It supports all individual existence in nature. The Psychic being is a conscious form of that soul growing in the evolution, in the persistent process that develops first life in matter, mind in life, until finally mind can develop into overmind and overmind into the supramental Truth. The soul supports the nature in its evolution through these grades, but is itself not any of these things. The psychic being is, according to Aurobindo, the original conscience of man\woman. It is the concealed witness, hidden guide, inner light, and inner voice of the mystic. Sri Aurobindo uses the word consciousness in the following senses: Conscious Being or spirit; *Purusha or Chaitanya,* Awareness of knowledge; *Chit, Chetana* or *Jnana,* Consciousness force or conscious energy; *Chit- Shakti*, Power of awareness of self and things; *Chetana*, The faculty of becoming aware of anything; *Chitta, Manas Chetana.* Consciousness is a fundamental thing, the fundamental thing is existence. Not only the microcosm but also the macrocosm is nothing but consciousness arranging itself.

Being and Becoming as Real

Sri Aurobindo definitely tries to solve the problem of Being and Becoming in the most original manner. He tells that both Being and Becoming are real. He takes both the facts of Being and Becoming with equal importance. The word 'Being' is not used by Sri Aurobindo always strictly in the sense of Atman or the original and fundamental reality except in a few places like the Divine Being, the Supreme Being etc… In other places he has used it in the sense of existence or that which exists or is conceived of existing, life, etc… as the word is generally used in the English language. The Absolute manifests itself in two terms, Being and Becoming. The Being is the fundamental reality; it is a dynamic power and result, an effectual reality, a creative energy and working out of the Being, a constantly persistent yet mutable form, process, and outcome of its immutable formless essence. What is original and eternal for ever in the Divine is the being; what is developed in consciousness, conditions, forces, forms etc… by the Divine power is Becoming. The eternal Divine is the Being; the universe in time and all that is apparent in it is Becoming.

3.7 SYNTHESIS OF YOGA

Attainment of supramental status is not the ultimate destiny of human being. The superman also has to work for the transformation of others. So, one has to lead a divine life - a perfected life on earth - a life not of limited consciousness but a life of inner completeness and perfection of being. Aurobindo believes that this divine life can be realized with the help of yoga. Describing the nature of yoga, he says, "yoga means union with the divine, a union either transcendental or cosmic or individual or as in our yoga, all three together." Yoga helps all the aspects of evolution: widening, heightening and integration and therefore it is integral. The triple yoga of knowledge, devotion, and action leads to the transformation of man's\woman's mind, emotion and will. Aurobindo classified the various yoga according to the way they have inserted themselves in human life. Here we have a more complete list of yoga: (at the lower level we have the *'Hata yoga'*, which is concerned with the bodily transformation. (b) A little higher we have '*Raja yoga'* which is concerned with the transformation of the mental level. (c) Finally, we have the yoga of triple transformation with its three branches of *jnana, bhakti* and *karma*, which lead finally to the yoga of self-perfection.

3.8 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

We find in his early writings a radical approach to politics. We see that nationalism appears as a sort of religion for him in the early period of his life. According to him the individual is a value that cannot be subordinated to society. The individual has a key role to play since it is through him\her that the supramental is to manifest itself in the world. Although Aurobindo uses organic analogies to speak of society he always sees that the individual in society is more than a cell in the body. He does not oppose individual and society. Both are manifestation of the divine reality. There is a relationship of reciprocity between these two and both tend towards the same goal.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Aurobindo explain his theory of involution and evolution?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

2) Where does Aurobindo situate man in the process of evolution?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

3) Explain Aurobindo's understanding of 'yoga'.

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………….
4) Explain the social and political philosophy of Aurobindo.

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………….

3.9 RADHAKRISHNAN'S LIFE AND WORKS

He was born on 5th September, 1888 at Tiruttani, a small village, forty miles northeast of Madras. He was the second child to his parents. From 1900 to 1904, he studied in Voorhees College, Vellore. Later he moved to Madras and studied in Madras Christian College. He rendered his service as a teacher in philosophy in Madras Presidency College and in the University of Mysore. He was Vice President from 1952 to 1962 that is for two consecutive terms. Later he became the President of the Indian Union securing 97.98% vote for the term of five years. His main works include: *East And West, Eastern Religion and Western Thought, East and West in Religion, The Reign of Religion In The Contemparaty Philosophy, Religion and Society, The Recovery of Faith, Indian Philosophy, An Idealist View of Life, The Hindu View of Life* etc.

Radhakrishnan had deep study of the classical literature. He studied the Indian philosophy in depth, which had influenced him very much. The study of Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, Commentaries on Brahman Sutra by Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Nimbaraka, and others, The Dialogue of Buddha and The Buddhist and Jain Scriptures broadened his thought. Western philosophers such as Plato, Pontinus, Kant, Bradley, Bergson and Whitehaead also influenced him in his writings. Amongst the contemporary thinkers of India, Gandhi and Tagore were his friends and they had definite influence on him. Radhakrishnan is a mystic philosopher. His religious thought serves as the data to his philosophy. Though he had widely read the ancient, medieval and modern philosophies, still for the real source of his writing he relies on his personal spiritual experiences.

Nature of his philosophy

His basic philosophical position is of a kind of a synthesis of Advaita Vedanta and the philosophy of Absolute Idealism. Like Vedanta he believes that the reality is one, like Absolute Idealism, he shows that everything is a necessary aspect of the One. So, it can broadly be described as a philosophy of monistic idealism. Since Radhakrishnan conceives reality as spiritual, he is an idealist. He realized the need for a re-awakening of the soul and a recovery of the spiritual life. Thus his philosophical thinking seems to be an attempt to illustrate that the ultimate nature of the universe is spiritual. Because of his tremendous emphasis on spirituality, he appears to be a mystic too.

3.10 THE ABSOLUTE OR THE BRAHMAN

Radhakrishnan conceives the nature of the absolute as monistic. In other words, the absolute in itself is essentially one. He has come to realize that the world expresses a unity within its process. This is the reason why he emphasises the monistic character of the absolute. The absolute is conceived by Radhakrishnan as 'Pure Consciousness', 'Pure Freedom', and Infinite Possibility.' According to Radhakrishnan, the Absolute has to be spiritual. It is conceived as a free spirit. It is free in such a way that there is nothing to limit it. Its freedom is uninterrupted. The absolute is also infinite. It is self-grounded and is the foundation of everything else. Since it is infinite it is changeless. It is also self-existent and complete-in-itself. It is also eternal in the sense of being timeless. Radhakrishnan calls the Absolute 'the whole of perfection'. Because of these reasons he asserts that the Absolute is beyond all kinds of expression.

Absolute and God

Radhakrishnan distinguishes between the Absolute and God. He feels that in order to explain the universe it is necessary to think of a principle that would account for the order and purpose of the universe. He also feels that there has to be a principle, a God- a non-temporal and actual being-by which the indeterminateness of creativity can be transmitted into a determinate principle. So it implies that the Divine Intelligence- the creative power- has to be conceived as the intermediary between the Absolute Being and the cosmic process. It is here that the principle of God appears in the philosophy of Radhakrishnan. The supreme has been conceived as revealing itself in two ways; Absolute and Ishwara. God is the Absolute in action; it is God, the creator. The real in relation to itself is the Absolute and the real in relation to the creation is God. He believes that the Absolute is the object of metaphysical aspiration and God is of religious aspiration.

Reconciliation between Sankara and Ramanuja

Radhakrishnan reconciles the views of Sankara and Ramanuja by maintaining that the Brahman of Sankara is Absolute and that of Ramanuja is God. God is a person, but the Absolute is not. God is an object of the intellect, but the Absolute is known through intuition. The Absolute is pre-cosmic God and God is the projected power of the Absolute. Intuition is higher than intellect and it overcomes the dualism of subject and object. Our thought is limited, and when it tries to grasp the Supra rational Absolute, it imposes its own limitations on the former. Thus, God is the Absolute pressed into the moulds of thought, which can't do away with the distinction between the self and the other; but this distinction is overcome by intuition, which is Supra-rational.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) What is the main philosophical stand point of Radhakrishnan?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………

2) What are the factors that shaped the philosophy of Radhakrishnan?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………….
3) How does Radhakrishnan make a distinction between the Absolute and God?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………….

3.11 THE NATURE OF THE WORLD AND CREATION

Since he considers God as the creative principle of the world, he presents a spiritualistic account of creation and the world. The universe is conceived as expressing an aspect of the Divine plan. The world is created by God. The world has a beginning and an end. God is not separate from it. God is said to be the past, the present and the future of the world; and yet he is quite different from the world. This distinction is between the creator and the created. Creation is the actualization of one of the inherent possibilities of the Absolute. Radhakrishnan explains that the Spirit enters into the spirit of the non-spirit to realize one of the infinite possibilities that exist potentially in the spirit. He also speaks of the accidental nature of the world where he affirms that the creation is a free act of God. In other words, creation is not a necessary act for the creator. He also says that though the universe is an accident, it is real so far as it is the Absolute's accident.

3.12 HUMAN BEING AND THE NATURE OF SOUL

In explaining the nature of soul, Radhakrishnan seems to be a realistic. He accepts the ultimate spiritual nature of the soul and at the same time, he asserts the reality and value of the biological life also. He affirms that human being cannot be fully known through the science alone. There is still something in man\woman which is beyond intellect and senses. So, according to Radhakrishnan, there are two aspects of human being. They are known as finite and infinite aspects of man\woman. Radhakrishnan used the word 'soul' in a very wider sense; so much as even those bodily activities which have tendency towards self-transcendence are called as soul-activities. Human being, unlike other beings, has a peculiar ability to reflect and to plan. He\she can go beyond himself\herself. Radhakrishnan calls it as 'self-transcendence.' For him it is one of the important aspects of the soul. Radhakrishnan defines the finite aspects of man\woman as those aspects that are determined by the empirical or environmental conditions. He calls this aspect of man\woman differently- 'the empirical man', 'the physical man', 'the natural man', 'the bodily man' etc. He also speaks of the infinite nature of human being. Beyond his\her external conditioning, there lies a capacity of self-transcendence. It is different and higher than the empirical. Radhakrishnan calls it as 'the spirit' in man /woman. In other words, the infinite aspect of man\woman consists in his\her spirituality.

Karma

Everything in the universe is an effect of its past and is the cause of its future changes at the same time. It embodies the energy of the past as well as causes changes in the future. Karma is not so much a principle of reward and punishment but as one of continuity. Karma has two

aspects, retrospective and prospective, continuity with the past as well as creative freedom of the self. The karmas bind us with the past by giving structure to our self and thereby determining it to that extent, yet man\woman is free in his\her actions and acquires fresh potencies. Radhakrishnan says that we are both determined and free. Our actions are determined by our past Karmas. In whatever we do we are determined by the character of our self. The dynamic organisation of the tendencies of self is evidently a matter of our past karmas. But still we are free in our actions and have wide scope for fresh activity. Radhakrishnan removes the prevailing misconceptions by asserting that the theory of Karma is not one based on reward and punishment and it is also wrong to think that moral and virtuous Karmas lead to success and evil to failure.

Freedom and Self Determination

Free will is action done by self-determination. When an individual performs an action of his\her own choice, the act done is a self-determined one. Radhakrishnan here explains the meaning of the word self–determination. A self is an organised whole, it represents a form of relatedness. Self-determination means action done by the whole of the self's nature. Only that action is free or self-determined in which "the individual employs his\her whole nature, searches the different possibilities and selects one which commends itself to his\her whole self."

Human Being as Relatively Free

There is no complete freedom in human being's action; it is only God who is absolutely free. When the self becomes co-extensive with one's whole being only then the self becomes absolutely free. Human being is only relatively free; it is a matter only of degrees. When an action is done by the whole self, we are most free. But our actions are least free when done by sheer habit or convention.

A human action is motivated with some ends or purposes. All his\her activities are regulated towards some purposes, and, therefore, our actions are determined by some external goals or ends in view. But our actions are also governed by our past. If men\women were free from their past deeds, there remains no moral responsibility on them. Therefore, no action is absolutely free either in the human or in the external world. There is the continuity of the past in the present and the present conditions the future.

Radhakrishnan is against the view of pre-destination, in which God is the sovereign who works without law or principle. For him life is a gracious gift of God, who expresses his sovereignty through law. He says, "Such a view of divine sovereignty is unethical. God's love is manifested in and through law."

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Radhakrishnan look at the concept of nature?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

2) What is the approach of Radhakrishnan to human person?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

3) What is the understanding of Karma according to Radhakrishnan?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

Importance of Rebirth

Dr. Radhakrishnan speaks of rebirth in a concrete sense. According to him rebirths are essential for the realisation of the distant goal – salvation. It cannot be realised in a single life. As the span of life is short and realisation of union with God is a far-off goal, pursuit in the series of rebirths is essential. Radhakrishnan conceives that rebirths are essential for the realisation of the different possibilities existing in us.

Salvation

Radhakrishnan believes in the simultaneous salvation of all and not individual salvation. As God is the creator of the world, so long as the world lasts, God must continue as God without becoming one with Absolute. But the individual (*jiv* who is a creature of God must remain with God till the latter enters the Absolute. The world cannot disappear if there is a single soul without salvation. So individual salvation can only be incomplete salvation.

The self is the most integrated and highest product. The more a human being pursues his/ her ideals, the more integrated and organised he/she becomes. The highest degree of unity in an individual self is attained when life is identified with one supreme purpose. The supreme purpose of human being is to become God. The cosmos is working towards that end; it is rushing for the union with God. It is by meditation and ethical life that an individual breaks off his/her narrow individualism and unites with the spiritual universalism. When all selves obtain communion and oneness with God, when all become prophets and seers, the world realises its destiny. The final salvation of an individual is dependent on the cosmic salvation. At the ultimate end all the selves unite with the Absolute. There is achieved then the freedom from rebirth, cessation of worldly existence and eternal oneness with *Saccidananda.* The final salvation is attained when the selves lose their individuality and get united with the all-pervading Absolute. The selves merge in the Brahman and they lose their identity, existence, name and form.

3.13 HIS RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

Man\woman looks for meaning and direction in life. Reason alone cannot give meaning to him\her. Man\woman has a natural tendency to transcend/go beyond the phenomenal world. There is an innate impulse for perfection. He also speaks of universal religion, where all religions come together and contribute towards each other's growth. Authentic religion is "the wisdom of love that redeems suffering man". Religion is not a set of dogmas, beliefs, rituals, rites, creeds etc., but it must lead to Inner Realization. It is not institutionalized.

He dreamed of a secular India/India as secular nation. Secularism can't reject religion. Secularism is an attitude of respect for all religious faith or anything, which human beings hold as sacred. It is based on the sanctity of individuals. The essence of democracy is consideration for others, respecting each one as sacred and encouraging the rich variety and diversity. The aim of democracy is 'just society'.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Radhakrishnan explain his concept of cosmic salvation?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

2) What is the political philosophy of Radhakrishnan?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

3.14 LET US SUM UP

Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is the basic philosophy of the twentieth century, Indian philosophy. His philosophy is a mighty synthesis of the oriental and the occidental, the ancient and modern thoughts, which can break up into many channels of thought. He presents the ultimate reality as spiritual. Presentation of God as '*Sachidananda*' is peculiar to Aurobindo. In his thought matter is spirit. The integral theory of evolution put forth by Sri. Aurobindo is one of the best theories of evolution. The higher, spiritual and divine principles of consciousness get unfolded in evolution process. Sri Aurobindo is the first seer who points out to us the nature of the spiritual principle of consciousness. He also propounds earthly immortality. But his individual salvation is inseparably related with the cosmic yoga. Sri Aurobindo envisages spiritual humanism too. So in this sense, his philosophy contributes much to the philosophical literature.

Radhakrishnan's philosophy can be termed as monistic idealism. One of his main concerns was to give a spiritual outlook to everything. He also makes a distinction between the Absolute and God. The world is considered as the creative work of God. But at the same time both God and the world are different. The credit goes to Radhakrishnan for providing a holistic understanding of human person. He affirms the spiritual nature of human soul but at the same time gives due respect to the value of the biological aspect of human person. He provides a very reasonable and practical explanation of the theory of karma by removing the traditional misconception regarding it. While speaking about the self-determination, he assumes that the human being is relatively free. His explanation on the cosmic salvation explains that cosmic salvation is possible when all identify themselves with the Absolute losing each one's identity. Though many consider him as an interpreter, the greatness of Radhakrishnan lies on the fact that he presented his philosophical conviction systematically and with an academic precision.

3.15 KEY WORDS

Mysticism: The word mysticism has been derived from the Greek word *mystikos*. It is the pursuit of communion with, identity with, or conscious awareness of an ultimate reality, divinity, spiritual truth, or God through direct experience, intuition, instinct or insight.

Karma; The universal causal law by which good or bad actions determine the future modes of an individual's existence. Karma represents the ethical dimension of the process of rebirth.

3.16 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Aurobindo. *The Future of Man.* Pondicherry: Aurobindo Ashram, 1970.

------------. The *Hour of God.* Pondicherry: Aurobindo Ashram, 1970.

------------. The *Life Divine.* Pondicherry: Aurobindo Ashram, 1970.

------------. *The Lights on Yoga.* Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1942.

Chaudary, Haridas. Ed. *The Integral Philosophy Sri Aurobindo.* London. George Allen and Unwin Ltd.1960.

Chaudary, Haridas. Sri Aurobindo, *The Prophet of Life Divine.* Calcutta. Sri Aurobindo Path Mandir.1951.

Maitra, S K. *The Meeting of the East and West in Aurobindo's philosophy.* Pondicherry: Aurobindo Ashram, 1970.

Naravana, V.S. *Modern Indian Thought.* Bombay: Asian Publishing House, 1967.

Purani, A.B. *Sri Aurobindo, Some Aspects of His Vision.* Bombay. Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan.1966.

Sharma, Ramnath. *Philosophy of Aurobindo.* Lucknow: Bharatiya Prakasan Ltd, 1960.

Arapura, J. G. *Radhakrishnan and Integral Experience.* Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962.

Dhawan, M. L. *Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.* Delhi: Bhavanan Prakashan, 1985.

Madhavan, T. M. P. *Invitation to Indian Philosophy.* Delhi: Arnold Heinemann publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1982.

McDermott, Robert A. *Basic Writings of Dr. Radhakrishnan.* Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1981.

Munshi K. M. and etal. *Radhakrishnan Reader an Anthology.* Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1990.

Radhakrishnan, S. *Indian Philosophy.* London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1996.
Radhakrishnan, S. *An Idealist view of Life.* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1932.
Radhakrishnan, S. *The Hindu View of Life.* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1927.
Sinta, Jadunath. *Indian Philosophy, I.* Delhi: Motital Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1999.

Srivastava, Rama Shanker. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1983.

UNIT 4 B.R AMBEDKAR AND RAIMUNDO PANIKKAR

Contents

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this unit is to provide a bird's eyeview on the basic philosophical understanding of B.R Ambedkar & Raimundo Panikkar. The first part (Ambedkar) will mainly focus on Ambedkar's main thoughts which were born out of his social thinking. The second part introduces Raimundo Panikkar's main concepts and understanding which have its foundation on his inter-religious and inter-cultural thoughts.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, popularly known as Baba Saheb Ambedkar, was one of the most learned among the political and social leaders of the 20th century in India. He wrote many books and edited many papers. He wrote not only on the problems of the Dalits, but also on economics, politics, religion, minorities, education, labour, stratification of society etc.

Raimondo Panikkar, a reputed thinker, has been an inspiring presence in the field of multi-faith and multi-cultural dialogue for over half a century. He occupies a unique place in the history of both Indian and world history of philosophy and theology by way of coupling Indian thoughts with the western.

4.2 AMBEDKAR'S LIFE AND WORKS

Ambedkar, the glory of India and pride of Dalits was born on April 14, 1891 in a low caste family of suppressed *Mahar* community of Mhow in Madhya Pradesh. After his graduation, he received scholarship from the king of Baroda for higher studies in USA and England. He graduated in law and took a doctorate in economics. On account of ill treatment meted out to him being an untouchable, he left the service and returned to Bombay to practice law. On 14th October 1935, he declared that he would not die in Hinduism. He served the country as the chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee. Ambedkar is regarded as the modern Manu and deserves to be called the father or the chief architect of the Constitution of India. On August 15, 1947, he was made the minister of law in the Central Cabinet and he resigned that post in 1951 due to the difference of opinion on the bill on Hindu code. He embraced neo-Buddhism with his three lakh followers on October 14, 1956 just before his death on December 6, 1956. His works include: *Slavery and Untouchabiliity; Which is Worse?; Annihilation of Caste; A Reply to Mahatma Gandhi; What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to Untouchables?; Who Were Shudras?; The Buddha and his Dhamma; Annihilation of Caste.*

4.3 INFLUENCE AND BACKGROUND TO HIS THOUGHTS

Ambedkar was born in a community of those who have been unjustly treated as the despised people of the Indian soil. Right from his childhood, he suffered terribly the social evils of caste discrimination and its holocaust called untouchability. He was a voracious reader and owned one of the largest personal libraries. He had a vast reading on Karl Marx, Bertrand Russel, Harold Lasky, Leo Tolstoy and George Bernard Shaw. In a way Ambedkar continued the same tradition of liberal thought found in the writings of social reformers like Rande. Ambedker's social theory was influenced by the British liberal tradition too. Buddhist teaching also made a great impact on the philosophy of Ambedkar.

Ambedkar's purpose was practical rather than speculative and his philosophy of life was essentially a development and evolution under the condition of an inhuman social order and a wrongly idealized social relationship in India that treated the human existence of Dalits as subhuman. For him social reform has to come before the political reform. He criticizes violently the caste system. He feels that the caste system as it stands cannot be the basis of society. He believes that the caste system should be rejected as basically unjust; it is a social system which embodies the arrogance and selfishness of a perverse section of the Hindus who were superior enough in social status to set in fashion and who have authority to force it on their inferiors. Caste does not result in economic efficiencies. Caste cannot and has not improved the race. The whole life-ambition of Ambedkar was to regain social equality to the former untouchables among whom he was born.

4.4 AMBEDKAR'S SOCIAL THOUGHT

The ideal to be realized is of one man\woman, one value in all walks of life, political, economic, and social. This ideal of one value is to be achieved by stopping religious, social and economic exploitation of man\woman by man\woman. Absence of exploitation in any form is the essence of socialism. Socialism does not only embrace economic equality, but also social and political equality. The foremost hindrance to socialism in India is the caste system in Hinduism and its byproduct untouchability which denied almost all the human rights to the untouchables. Following are the characteristics of Ambedkar's state socialism: Condemnation of existing social, political and economic order as unjust order, An advocacy of a new order based on the principle of one man (woman), one value, one vote, A belief that this ideal is realizable through socialism and parliamentary democracy and constitutional means, A revolutionary way of establishing social democracy to carry out the programme of social solidarity.

He had expressed his desire in the parliament to establish a social democracy, which would satisfy the economic, social, educational and cultural needs of the people. In his concluding speech in the constituent assembly on November 25, 1949 he declared: social democracy means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principle of life. These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items of a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one form from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. The basic concept of Ambedkar's political thought is the equality of all men\women, which is to be achieved by a state socialism of a constitutional and parliamentary democracy.

Origin of Caste and Untouchability

The concept of the origin of caste and untouchability according to Ambedkar is to a large extent different from that of the Vedic and the non-Vedic theories of caste. Ambedkar holds that caste as a closed system has its genesis in the practice of superimposition of endogamy over exogamy. The practice of untouchability for Ambedkar has its origin in the phase of conflict between the settled and nomadic tribes and those who were defeated in the war were forced to be the 'broken men'. The broken men (women), in the course of history due to the onslaught of Vedic Brahmanism, were turned into untouchables (Dalits).

Annihilation of Caste System

Annihilation of casteism is one of the most essential elements in Ambedker's socio-philosophical frame. It cannot be done just by abolishing the sub-sects, nor by inter caste dining. Ambedkar proposes a solution on two levels: (a) the proximate, immediate means to remove caste is intermarriage. (b) But the fundamental remedy consists in bringing about a social reform before political reforms and in denying the faith in *shastras*, where he says; "you must not only discard the *shastras*, you must deny their authority. You must have the courage to tell the Hindus what is more wrong with their religion." According to him the Hindu is the sick man\woman of the society who makes other people also sick. His protest against Hinduism was expressed by burning *Manusmriti* in a public meeting.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) What are the primary assumptions of the philosophical thinking of Ambedkar?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

2) What is the social teaching of Ambedkar?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

3) What is the origin of caste and untouchability according to Ambedkar?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

4) How is the annihilation of caste possible according to Ambedkar?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

4.5 AMBEDKAR'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

His political thinking seems to revolve around the following two convictions: (a) Rights are protected not by laws, but by the social and moral conscience of the society. (b) A democratic form of government presupposes a democratic form of society. Indian constitution remains indebted to Ambedkar for his significant contribution to the peaceful living in the land of diversity. For Ambedkar, state is to provide security against internal disorder and external aggression. The state stands for the welfare of its members. It is the people who make the state and hence the state is to serve the needs of the people. It is a means to achieve the common good of the society. Between state and society, Ambedkar would prefer society as the primary and state as secondary. State, according to Ambedkar, is not of a divine origination but of human origination. To him, the state is a human organization with its objective being the protection of the rights of the individuals. One of his major convictions evident in his political philosophy can be stated as. The state was not an end in itself, but only means for the furtherance of human ends in the interests of a better future of the society. He greatly emphasized the role of the law of the state in the growth of the individual. To him, law was an important factor in maintaining social peace and justice among different groups of people. Thus, he concludes that all are equal before the law. He upheld right as the basis for the human development and the nation at large.

Ambedkar advocated "One state one language formula", because he thought it would be a solvent to radical and cultural conflicts. He also advised his country fellows that if they were willing to remain united and integrated as a whole and want to develop common harmonious culture, they should put all the efforts to adopt one language – Hindi, as a common language. The division of the states on the basis of language has created blocks in realizing the Indianness. It has given vent to the upsurge of regionalism that has attenuated the integrity of India. People have confined themselves within the walls of the state. Therefore it is very difficult to accept others as brothers and sisters.

Idea of Freedom

Ambedkar's idea of freedom is very different from Gandhi and Nehru. The main concern of these two national heroes was more of political freedom. But Ambedkar's main focus was political freedom with social freedom. For him political freedom was meaningless without the social and economic freedom. His life was a hope for the hapless people who were exploited unjustly.

Meaning of Democracy

According to Ambedkar, democracy is not merely a form of government, it is primarily a form of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. For him the essence of democracy is the equal share in the existence of human rights. He realized the incapability of Western pattern of Democracy and he gave a new meaning to the term Democracy. For him democracy means the absence of slavery, caste, and coercion. The roots of Democracy are to be searched in social relationship, in terms of the associated life among people.

4.6 CONCEPT OF HUMAN PERSON

He develops his concept of human being in relation to his understanding of social order. According to him, a good social order must recognize the individual in the society. By

recognizing the individual, a good social order collectively recognizes the good of the community. In the absence of the individual, the notion of society or collectivity ceases to exist. Therefore, the primary role of a good society is that it should treat 'man (woman) as an individual' first. He\she needs to be respected in the society for the reason that he\she is a human person. He further holds that human existence is not to be treated solely in the physical sense alone, but it has to be respected in the sense of something higher that a human has spiritual super-existence through knowledge and love. For Ambedkar respect of the individual devoid of any caste- class stratification is sacred.

For him the human society is to be built on the foundation of freedom or liberty, equality and fraternity. These values are based on the notion that the individual human person is not a means but an end himself. While the concept of liberty emphasizes the inviolability of the human person, the concept of equality insists that the right of the individual is to be treated as an equal and to be respected as complete member of the society irrespective of his\her attainments. Similarly, fraternity, according to Ambedkar, is the disposition of an individual to treat men/women in reverence and love and dignity and the desire to be in unity with other fellow beings. Fraternity gives strength for the individual to commit for the welfare of all. Ambedkar further points out that the tenets of liberty, equality and fraternity are interlinked to each other and they are rooted in the idea of upholding the totality of the human person as complete individual in the society.

4.7 HIS ATTITUDE TO RELIGION

His attitude towards religion was not spiritual like that of Gandhi. His approach was intellectual and socio-political. Ambedkar holds that religion is a part of one's social life or inheritance; one's life and dignity and pride are bound up with it. He believes in the social force of religion; and that force lies in religion being a unified system of beliefs and practices. According to him, religion is an influence or force suffused through the life of each individual molding his\her character, determining his\her action and reactions, his\her likes and dislikes in the society.

Religion for Ambedkar should respond to the problem of human society and promote human community living. In this sense, Ambedkar recognizes the Marxist frame that religion is a social phenomenon. However he differs from the Marxist orientation that religion is the opium of people. Rather he strongly upholds that the religion is natural and necessary for human community living. In agreement with the Marxian frame, Ambedkar conceives a false religion as an ideology that could be used as a tool to oppress the Dalits. It is here that Ambedkar makes a critical approach to Hinduism. According to him, in the name of god the religion, *Varnashrama Dharma* and untouchability were advocated in India. It was contended that the given unjust social structure was God-given and hence cannot be changed. Due to this Ambedkar developed utmost anger towards Hinduism and Hindu gods and even god-based religions like Islam and Christianity were not acceptable to him. Perhaps, because of this factor, he could not take a final decision or conversion until 1956. Buddhism, finally he accepted, was not primarily god-oriented, but was thoroughly Indian. He looked at religion from cultural dimension. He was on the assumption that if the depressed classes join Islam or Christianity they not only go out of Hindu religion, but they also go out of Hindu culture. Conversion to Islam or Christianity would denationalize the depressed classes. He separated religion from culture and held Hindu religion responsible for slavery, the practice of

untouchablity and exploitation of the depressed classes. Ambedkar was of the opinion that the social ideals of Buddhism are the best way to be adopted to promote peaceful social living because the Buddha's method is based on love, persuasion and moral teaching.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) How does Ambedkar develop his political philosophy?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

2) How does Ambedkar look at human person?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………

3) What is the approach of Ambedkar to religion?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………

4.8 LIFE AND WORKS OF RAIMUNDO PANIKKAR

Born on 3 November 1918 in Barcelona to the parents who came from diverse backgrounds, Raimon Panikkar became a reputed figure in the field of theology, philosophy and social thinking. His father was an Indian Hindu and his mother was a Catalan Catholic. Panikkar was ordained a Catholic priest in 1946. Later, he undertook studies in Indian philosophy and religion. For the next fifty years Panikkar pursued his academic career as a professor in European, Indian and North American universities. Some of his works include; *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism, The Trinity and Religious Experience, Worship and Secular Man, The Vedic Experience, Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics, The Intra-religious Dialogue* and *The Cosmotheandric Experience*.

Basic Stand Point

Raimondo Panikkar still remains as reputed figure in the field of inter-religious dialogue. So his primary concern is that of culture, religion and the relationship between the two. Religion, philosophy and culture are three "elements" of the human reality. If the first could be compared to the feet with which Man journeys towards his destiny, philosophy could represent the eyes that scrutinize that journey, and culture, the earth on which human being is

walking during his\her concrete pilgrimage. An intercultural approach shows that one cannot separate Philosophy from Religion, and that both are dependent on the culture which nurtures them.

4.9 PHILOSOPHY, CULTURE AND INTERCULTURALITY

Philosophy could be understood as the activity by which human being participates consciously and in a more or less critical manner, in the discovery of reality and orients himself\herself within the latter. The concept has thus become the unique instrument of philosophy. Each culture offers to philosophy the language that is essential for the philosophy to formulate its insights. But it is the philosophy that tries to question the very foundations on which each culture is based. Philosophy is authentic, revolutionary, protesting and transforming. In other words, each philosophy emerges from the womb of a culture, and simultaneously by questioning what holds that culture together, can transform it. In fact, every deep cultural change has emerged from philosophical activity. It is philosophers who influence most of the destinies of history.

Interculturality

Interculturality is the philosophical imperative of our times. Monoculturalism is lethal and multiculturalism is impossible. Interculturality recognizes both assertions and seeks a middle way. Interculturality is inherent to the human being and a unique culture is as incomprehensible and impossible as a single universal language and as one man alone. Interculturality is a possibility situated between two (or more) cultures. We cannot claim to define through one single word what intercultural philosophy is, nor even presuppose that such a philosophy exists. Each culture is a galaxy which secretes its self-understanding, and with it, the criteria of truth, goodness, and beauty of all human actions. There are no cultural universals. But there are, for sure, human invariants. But the way according to which each one of the human invariants is lived and experienced in each culture is distinct and distinctive in each case. Cultural respect requires that we respect those ways of life that we disapprove, or even those that we consider as pernicious.

4.10 MULTI-FAITH DIALOGUE AND DIALOGICAL DIALOGUE

For Panikkar, multi-faith dialogue is both a highly political and highly urgent activity directed towards creating new forms of human consciousness and corresponding new forms of religiousness. It involves the crossing-over of traditions in a manner that does not abandon one's primal tradition, but deepens and extends it. Something new is created at the level of human and religious consciousness. Panikkar's primary principle for religious encounter is that it must be a truly religious experience. According to him, it is more an exchange of religious experiences than of doctrines. The dialogue route is existential, intimate and concrete. Its purpose is not to establish some universal religion. For the philosopher, it is in order that human relations remain personal. One cannot have human contact with a computer; a machine is not a person. Genuine dialogue between religions, therefore, ought to be this dialogue: between you and me, between you and your neighbour; it should be like a rainbow where we are never sure where one colour begins and another ends. It must be free from particular and general apologetics.

Those involved in interfaith dialogue should not see their task in terms of defending religion in general against the non-religious or anti-religious attitudes of secular society. Religious encounter is a meeting of persons, not simply the meeting of minds. It is not only a theological symposium but a religious encounter in faith, hope and love.

Dialogical Dialogue

Dialogical dialogue begins with the assumption that the other is also an original source of human understanding and that, at some level, persons who enter the dialogue have a capacity to communicate their unique experiences and understandings to each other. There are certain indispensable prerequisites for dialogical dialogue. These include a deep human honesty, intellectual openness and a willingness to forego prejudice in the search for truth while maintaining "profound loyalty towards one's own tradition." Second, one needs a deep commitment and desire to understand another tradition. Both partners are encouraged to "cross over" to the other tradition and then "cross back again" to their own. One learns to think and understand on the basis of the symbol systems of more than one tradition. Symbols are both bounded and open. Their interpretation is never exhausted. And yet they are concrete, always tied to a particular worldview.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) In what way, according to Panikkar, philosophy and culture are related to each other?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

2) How does Panikkar explain the concept of intercultarality?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

3) Explain the process of inter-religious dialogue according to Panikkar?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………

4.11 THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE DIVINE, HUMAN AND NATURE

The individual who is separate from the others, or from the earth or the divine, does not exist. We belong both to earth and to the divine by our very nature. We are conscious and free parts of a whole, but not as puppets that can be easily directed by threads, but rather we find ourselves within a cosmic interweaving or network. The human being is a person, not an individual. I understand a person as 'a knot in a net' of relationships. These threads connect us with our fellow men, the earth and divinity. The more conscious the person is, the more

he\she realizes that his\her person reaches out to the confines of the world. That is the enlightened man\woman.

Cosmotheandirc Vision

Panikkar develops his cosmotheandric vision of reality with reference to three major religious traditions: the Christian Trinity; the Vedanta Hindu *Advaita*; the Buddhist *pratityasamutpada*. He believes that the threefold pattern-traditionally *Theos-anthropos-cosmos*- are invariants of all religions and cultures. He describes the cosmotheandric principle as an intuition of the threefold structure of all reality, the triadic oneness existing on all levels of consciousness and reality. In Christian terms, ultimate reality, the Trinity, is one but also three; in Hindu terms the ultimate unity of all things is literally neither one (*advait* nor two (*advitya*); in Buddhist terms everything is radically related to everything else (*pratityasamutpada*).

The cosmotheandric principle could be stated by saying that the divine, the human and the earthly are the three irreducible dimensions which constitute the real. Everything that exists, any real being, presents this triune constitution expressed in three dimensions. Panikkar's formulation of reality as *cosmotheandric* challenges the assumption that reality is reducible to Being: there is also Non-Being, the abyss, silence and mystery. We cannot identify even the consciousness with reality because there is also matter and spirit. Panikkar conceives that reality is not mind alone, or *cit*, or consciousness, or spirit. Reality is also *sat* and *ananda*, also matter and freedom, joy and being. In fact, this is for Panikkar the fundamental religious experience; Being or reality transcends thinking. Panikkar's cosmotheandric vision reveals three assumptions regarding the reality. Firstly, reality is ultimately harmonious. Secondly, reality is radically relational and interdependent in such a way that every reality is constitutively connected to all other realities. Thirdly, reality is symbolic. We do not have a God separate from the world, a world that is purely material, nor humans that are reducible to their own thought-processes or cultural expressions.

Concept of *Theos*

The divine dimension of reality is not an 'object' of human knowledge, but the depth-dimension to everything that is. Panikkar does not want to confine the divine mystery into mere God-talk. He identifies divine mystery using non-theistic terms as infinitude, freedom and nothingness. The mystery of the divine is the mystery of the inherent inexhaustibility of all things, at once infinitely transcendent, utterly immanent, totally irreducible, and absolutely ineffable.

Concept of *Anthropos*

Consciousness is the human dimension of reality which is not reducible to humanity: Consciousness permeates every being. Everything that is, is consciousness. In other words, consciousness relates not only to humans who know but to everything else that is actually or potentially known. From the other perspective, if consciousness relates to everything, the human person can be never reduced to consciousness. Panikkar presents human experience as a threefold reality: aesthetic, intellectual and mystical. He critiques technocratic culture for reducing human life to two levels, namely, the sensible and the rational, forgetting the mystical aspect.

Panikkar's intention is to show that genuine human experience involves the harmony of senses, intellect and mystical awareness in correlation with matter, thought and freedom. Thought and mystical awareness are not possible without matter, indeed, without the body. All our thoughts, words, states of consciousness and the like are also material, or have a material basis.

Concept of *Cosmos*

The world of matter, energy, space and time is our home. These realities are ultimate and irreducible. There is no thought, prayer or action that is not radically cosmic in its foundations, expressions and effects. The earth is sacred. For example, he insists that there is something more than pure materiality in a simple stone. Through its existence in space and time, the stone is connected to the entire universe with which it shares its destiny. In Panikkar's terms, there are no disembodied souls or disincarnated gods, just as there is no matter, no energy, no spatio-temporal world without divine and conscious dimensions. Every concrete reality is cosmotheandric- a symbol of the `whole'. It is not only God who reveals; the earth has its own revelations. Matter, space, time and energy are then co-extensive with both human consciousness and the divine mystery.

Concept of Human Being

He places human person in the context of culture as his main concern was that of interculturalism. For him Man\Woman is a cultural animal. He also believes that culture is not extrinsic to him\her, but natural. He further explains that human is a being that is naturally cultural – or culturally natural. Culture is the field that makes it possible for us to cultivate the world that it itself presents to us, so that man\woman may become fully human and achieve his fullness. Culture is the specific form of human nature. The nature of man\woman is cultural. Culture is neither artificial nor additive to man\woman. The ultimate criterion for condemning another culture will therefore consist in showing that it is anti-natural.

Concept of Truth

According to Panikkar, truth does not allow itself to be conceptualized. It is never purely objective, absolute. To talk about absolute truth is really a contradiction in terms. The pretension of the great religions to possess all truth can only be understood in a limited and contingent context. Not to be conscious of our myths leads to integralism. But in order to be aware of our myths, we need our neighbour, and therefore dialogue and love. The truth is first of all a reality that permits us to live, an existential truth that makes us free. He says that he is not such a relativist as to believe that the truth is cut up in slices like a cake. But, he expresses his conviction that everyone participates in the truth. And the value of dialogue between the various religions is precisely to help me perceive that there are other windows, other perspectives. Therefore I need the other in order to know and verify my own perspective of the truth. Truth is a genuine and authentic participation in the dynamism of reality. He makes it clear that the dialogue between religions is not a strategy for making one truth triumphant, but a process of looking for it and deepening it along with others.

4.12 HIS UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGION

Religion is the path that leads one to the state of fulfillment or salvation. Salvation, understood here in its broadest sense, is anything making one whole, healthy, free, and

complete. It could also be understood by different people as heaven, nirvana, nothingness, just society, etc. Thus, a religion is that set of practice and\or doctrines which one believes will lead one to the liberation or fulfillment of one's being. These practices and doctrines are spatially, temporally and culturally conditioned. Within each religion one can distinguish three aspects: (1) the socio-historical expressions in and through which a religion is alive, (2) the sacramental or sacred structures that mediate a relationship to the transcendent and (3) the transcendent divine reality, the mystery, the goal of all religions. At the socio-historical level religions are equivalent to each other; at the sacramental level they complement and supplement each other; and the level of the mystery, which is neither one nor many, and which is called by many names and is experienced in many ways, religions bear witness to the infinite richness of the mystery and the impossibity of any one religion to exhaust it. For him religions are like the different colours of a rainbow, there are several colours and no colour has a monopoly over the others.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer

1) Explain the cosmotheandric vision of R. Panikkar?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………

2) Where does Panikkar place human being in his understanding?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………

3) What is the concept of truth according to Panikkar?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………

4) How does Panikkar look at religion?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………

4.13 LET US SUM UP

The underlying feature of the philosophical approach of Ambedkar is its praxis-orientedness. His philosophical thinking, in other way, has something to do with concrete life situations as his thinking was derived from the dreadful practice of casteism and untouchability. The basis of his socio-political philosophy is the establishment of a just society which is free from any

kind of exploitation. Even his approach to religion was born out of his social thinking. Though he criticizes religion, namely, Hinduism for perpetuating the prevailing poor social status of the backward communities, he also admits the indispensible nature of religion in fostering social living.

Focus on Panikkar's experience of Christian-Hindu, Christian-Buddhist and Christian-Secularist dialogue. It will outline his "rules of the game" for interreligious dialogue and intercultural encounter. Attention will be drawn to his distinct levels of religious discourse identified as *mythos, logos* and symbol. Panikkar's more adventurous proposal for the meeting of the world's religious and cultural traditions will be introduced through elucidation of his "cosmotheandric vision" of reality—what he now calls "the radical trinity" of cosmic matter, human consciousness and divine freedom. The conversation will conclude with an overall assessment of Panikkar's contribution to contemporary thinking on multi-faith dialogue and religious pluralism.

4.14 KEY WORDS

Annihilation of Caste: Ambedkar's social project of rejection of Brahmanical hegemony in social order

Cosmotheandric Vision: interconnectedness of realities of the Divine, human and the world

4.15 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

Ambedkar, B.R. *Slavery and Untouchability: Which is Worse?,* Dalit Dayal, New Delhi,1989.

Ambedkar, B.R. *Annihilation of Caste: A Reply to Mahatma Gandhi*, Dalit Shitya Academy, Bangalore, 1936.

Ambedkar, B.R. *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to Untouchables*?, Thacker and Company, Bombay, 1945.

Ambedkar, B.R. *Who Were Shudras?,* Thacker and Company, Bombay, 1946.

Ambedkar, B.R. *The Buddha and his Dhamma,* Siddharth Publications, Bombay, 1947.

Ahhuwalia, B.K. *B.R Ambedkar and Human Rights*, Vivek Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1981.

Bharathi k.s. *Foundations of Ambedkar Thought,* Dattsons Publications, 1990.

Chanchreek K.L. *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: Patriot, Philosopher and Statesman* [Vol II] H.K. Publishers & Distributers, New Delhi, 1991.

Bakshi, S.R. *Political Ideology of B.R.Ambedkar*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep and Publication Pvt. Ltd, 2000.

Bharathi, K.S. *Encyclopedia of Eminent Thinkers.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1998.

Chopra, P.N. ed. *Encyclopedia of India.* Vol.1. 10th ed. New Delhi: AGAM Prakash Publication, 1998.

Khan, H. Nazeer. *B.R.Ambedkar on Federalism, Ethnicity, Gender and Justice.* New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publication Pvt. Ltd, 2001.

Ambedkar and democracy" July 9 2006, [online]; available at htt:// www. ambedkar. com.

Raimon Panikkar, *The Intra-Religious Dialogue*, New York: Paulist Press, 1978.

Raimon Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience,* New York: Orbis Books, 1993.

Raimon Panikkar, *Invisible Harmony* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Raimon Panikkar, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*, New York: Orbis Books, 1981.

Raimon Panikkar, *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man,* London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973.

Gerard Hall, *Raimon Panikkar's Hermeneutics of Religious Pluralism*, Ann Arbor: UMI, 1994.